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The Week-end Review

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THOUGH the voice, the phrasing and the philosophy of life that underlay the speech of the British Ambassador at the Pilgrims were those of Lord Halifax, everyone is aware that the substance of what he said came out of the "War Aims" memoranda which received the assent of the War Cabinet.

In the lengthy introduction to this speech Lord Halifax broke completely with the outlook of the period of appeasement. We recall repeated declarations by himself, by Mr. Chamberlain, and even by Mr. Eden, in which they all deprecated any division of Europe into two ideological camps. To-day the struggle is defined as "a mortal clash of two philosophies." In his attempt to describe our own attitude to life and society there was much to which we should all assent. But by way of emphasising what divides us from our enemies, Lord Halifax stressed the claim to "individual liberty," until it became difficult to see how any ordered planning could find a place in the world we aspire to construct.

What, then, is to be "the structure of the community of nations" which a victorious Britain and America will seek to create after a "total victory"? The question may seem premature. The victory has yet to be won, and even then we have yet to learn the views of the American Senate. But it is important to discover what is in the mind of the British Government to-day. Several points emerge on which this speech gave us definite information. The new organisation that will replace the old League of Nations is to aim first at "economic welfare" and only secondly, if need be, at "defence." This emphasis on economics marks a welcome advance. Again Lord Halifax laid stress on provisions for "ordered change," a matter which the Genevan architects included only as an afterthought. We gather, further, that the new International Authority will be world-wide in its scope, for it is to aim at "world-unity." But its membership will be highly selective, for it will be open only to States which loyally seek the peace and prosperity of the world and only then if they "ensure individual liberty within their borders." This latter condition would exclude every totalitarian State; Russia, no less than Japan, Fascist Spain as well as Greece. We are in agreement on the principle of exclusion, but we would add the hope that before it has to be applied, the war of liberation will have reduced the number of these States.

What Lord Halifax had to tell us about the economics of the new Organisation was disappointing and even disquieting. He saw the cause of poverty to-day only in "the failure of men to exchange" their products with one another. He went on to define his aim as "the greatest possible interchange of goods and services." To prescribe universal free trade as the remedy for economic disorder will seem to most modern minds a relapse into the ways of thought of an obsolete world. The peasants of the Balkans, for instance, demand, not freedom to raise crops that may rot unsold, but an orderly system, which will carry their tobacco and wheat, year after year, at a stable price, to a covenanted purchaser. "Individual liberty" cannot guarantee that "freedom from want," which Lord Halifax also promised.

GREAT NEWS FROM JUGOSLAVIA

What Mr. Churchill rightly calls "great news" from Jugoslavia reaches us as we go to press. The common people of at least one small country refuse to submit to their Quislings. Prince Paul has fled. The Ministers who accepted the Axis Pact have been interned and a proclamation, appealing to all minority groups to unite against Germany, has been proclaimed. No one thinks the Jugoslav army capable of withstanding the Hitler legions; but the revolt may spread.

This news follows a bewildering week of rapid change. On Tuesday the Belgrade Government had capitulated and signed away Jugoslavia's neutrality. Up to last Thursday it was reasonable to hope that the Government would stand firm. The news that it had even handed over its leading Quisling, M. Stoyanodinovitch to British custody gave ground for the hope that Jugoslavia would make a heroic effort to defend herself against the Nazis. On Thursday the Cabinet broke into three fragments and gave way. The event that made this disaster inevitable was that the Croatian Ministers

one and all declared for a surrender to the Axis. From the beginning of history the Croats have quarrelled with the Serbs over everything from the alphabet to the Creed: they observed this ancient tradition by turning pro-German, while the Serbs remember their old ties with Greece and the West. The mass of the Serb population has begun to demonstrate its anger: the Church has made a protest and so has an organisation of reserve officers. Serb ministers and officials are resigning and some officers have crossed the frontier to fight for the Greeks. But in this mood of shame and alarm it lacks the leadership that spells action. On the last occasion, a generation ago, when the rulers of the little Servia of those days carried her into the Austrian camp, the army marched by night to the palace: portions of King Alexander and Queen Draga received a modest funeral. On this occasion big Jugoslavia is helpless, for in the face of the dissent of the Croats it could make no effective resistance. Once again the Axis has triumphed by dividing its victim. The terms of the treaty by which Jugoslavia adheres to the Axis Triple Alliance excuse her from opening her territory to German troops. But there are "secret" clauses—a wide-open secret—which require her to collaborate in the economic system of the New Order, and to carry its munitions and hospital trains over its railways, without supervision. This means at once that German aid will reach the Italians overland in Albania, and rather later that the Vardar route may be used in the attack on Salonika. Hitler's method is always to extort concessions one by one and *crescendo*. It is to be feared that before many weeks have passed German troops will be making full use of this railway. In the interval the Gestapo will deal with the leaders of the Serb Opposition. The Greeks, meanwhile, stand firm in their defiance, and the Turks have had their hands freed by an agreement with Moscow which assures them, in so far as words can give assurance, that Russia will do nothing to embarrass them if they have to fight a defensive war. This means that they are encouraged to defend the Dardanelles. But it is not clear whether, if they were to go to the aid of the Greeks, they would be "spreading the war" and engaging themselves in the "imperialist" struggle. That British help will be available on the spot is certain. We should all wish that it may be adequate in numbers and power. Once more by a successful sweep the Navy has proved its command over the Western Mediterranean.

Shipping

The decline of the volume of weekly shipping losses as published by the Admiralty by 27,000 tons to 71,000 tons is welcome. But even that figure is formidable and it is likely that losses due to the operations of surface raiders are not yet confirmed. Much greater efforts are needed. Under the threat of the second secret debate on shipping the Minister of Labour announced a scheme for pooling and decasualising dock-labour. He also announced a scheme which amounts to a conscription of labour in the ship-building and repairing industry. Both measures would have evoked far more energy and enthusiasm had the control and compulsion not been restricted to labour alone. The past record of the industry is surely not such as would arouse much confidence in its willingness and efficiency to expand output. What is required is national and unified control of all inland transport.

Quick improvement in our import capacity can now only come through American help. Apart from embarking on a building programme of at least the same proportions as in the last war when output increased from 389,000 tons in 1916 to 2,602,200 tons in 1918 and 3,579,800 tons in 1919, the United States will have to lease us ships and men-of-war "in being." This could be done by diverting some of the water-borne traffic to the railroads and by a reorganisation of the U.S.A. import-export structure. But if we ask America to make such sacrifice we must be able to convince them that we are doing everything in our power to help ourselves. A reorganisation of shipbuilding and repairing is only the first step in this direction. The next, and even more important is the introduction of a system of severe rationing of consumption *irrespective* of any possible surplus in our current capacity to import. If there should be any such surplus it must be used to build up stocks as quickly as possible. We must, furthermore, cut down as much as possible all bulky imports irrespective of the repercussions of such change on vested interests. Finally, the scheme curtailing and concentrating the production of non-essentials and any scheme to be devised to deal with the distributive trades must be so conceived as to enable such dispersal of stocks at each stage of production and distribution as to minimise losses from air raids. It is more than shocking to see the waste incidental to the Blitz attacks on our shopping centres increased by fact that traders have no incentive nor are they compelled to disperse their stocks. How long must we have the worst of both the competitive and of the planned State controlled worlds? Must the gestation of every idea take nine to sixteen months?

Week in Parliament (*from Our Parliamentary Correspondent*)

Was there ever such a muddle? First Duff-Cooper makes Attlee look a fool by flatly contradicting his statement that there should be no discrimination by the B.B.C. against artists because of their political opinions. Then Churchill makes Duff-Cooper look a fool by backing up Attlee. Anyway the Prime Minister realised in time the extent of the Parliamentary storm brewing up over this subject and decided to show the House once again the urbane and witty side of his character, which always charms Members of all parties. Latterly he has too frequently been in conflict with the sense of the House over business for the ensuing week, over the MacDonald Bill and so on, for the comfort of his supporters. It needs good temper and tolerance of honest criticism to lead a House of Commons deeply concerned about the welfare of the country.

On Thursday Mander raised an alleged breach of privilege by Bob Boothby, arising out of a newspaper report of a statement he made after his Divisional Executive had passed a vote of confidence in him. Many Members showed irritation at the matter being raised at all. They felt it would be much better to let sleeping dogs lie. Ultimately the motion that Boothby be ordered to be in his place on the next sitting day was toned down to "That Mr. Boothby do attend in his place upon the next sitting day," and in that form was unanimously agreed to. On Tuesday Boothby accordingly appeared to make his statement, which satisfied the House. His explanation was that he had certain facts which could not easily be disclosed during the war, and he proposed to put them into writing, depositing one copy with his Chairman to avoid the hazards inseparable from totalitarian war. Col. Gretton having made clear the readiness of the Select Committee to hear any relevant evidence from Boothby during its sittings, the matter dropped. Boothby who looked fit and assured spoke modestly and left the Chamber to the music of a sympathetic cheer.

The value of the House as an open forum was demonstrated again in the debate on the Second Reading of the Isle of Man (Detention) Bill. The point at issue was whether British subjects detained under 18B would lose any of their legal rights by being transferred from places of detention on the mainland to the Island. Apparently, although the writ of Habeas Corpus lies in the Island, it is doubtful whether it can be enforced. Members were rightly suspicious of any attempt to remove British subjects from the jurisdiction of British courts. Strangely enough it was stout champions of liberty like Josiah Wedgwood who were prepared to take chances in the matter, and it was ironical to hear the compiler of *Forever Freedom* quoting with gusto *Inter arma silent leges.*

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THE RECONSTRUCTORS

To Birmingham, to Coventry and to Bristol Lord Reith is sending his emissaries to study on the scene of war devastation the problems of rebuilding and civic renewal. It is well that he has done this; for the matter will not wait until the war is over. It is, no doubt, impossible for those whose premises have been destroyed to get at present either materials or labour for building up homes, or shops, or factories anew, or for carrying out more than the most rudimentary repairs to damaged structures. But, even so, as temporary shanties are erected on bombed sites and half-blitzed buildings made usable, questions are arising which demand answers at once. When a bombed-out tradesman starts again in a temporary building, or when another spends money on patching up his premises as far as he can, there arises in his mind, and in the minds of others, a presumption that he has a right to go on where he was, and that in due course the city will be rebuilt around him not very different from what it was before, with broadly the same street plan, the same main lines of traffic and shopping centres, and the same relative rents and site-values as before. If, later on, this is not so, and the new civic plan is shaped differently, so as to affect his business, he will feel that he has a grievance unless he is somehow compensated for his loss.

Nor is this the whole difficulty. Even in the worst devastated areas destruction is not complete. There survive undamaged houses, shops, and other buildings in the very midst of the desolation; and the proprietors of these properties also feel that they have a vested right. If the city is not built up again round these oases, they will resent its removal; and they will also, unless they are very fully compensated, oppose any plan which threatens to disturb their tenure of what is "their own."

Yet it is manifest that our cities need comprehensive re-planning, in order to adapt them to modern conditions of living, and that the opportunity now presented to us is unlikely ever to recur. Even if we assume that the blitzed cities ought to be rebuilt on their old sites, and with their old centres of urban life, it is indisputable that they ought to be rebuilt quite differently, with much more room in their centres for traffic, with much more open space, and with much more design, so that the buildings and their lay-out shall be the clear expression of a unifying spirit. But obviously this cannot happen without cutting right across the existing surface ownerships, without pulling down undamaged as well as damaged properties that do not fit in with the new plans, or without drastic powers of interference with the existing rights of landlords and tenants alike.

It may be argued that the inhabitants of these cities ought to be left to do their own planning, with help from the State, but not under any external control. In practice, however, control by the inhabitants means control by the local Councils; and there are several reasons why the local councillors may not be the best people to exercise these powers. One reason is that the suspension of local elections and other conditions of war make it difficult for them really to represent the citizens. A second is that, to put the point frankly, there are too many persons on the local Councils whose private interests may conflict with the general interests of the citizens. A third is that the councillors represent existing local government areas, whereas these areas are in many cases plainly and hopelessly the wrong units for any sensible replanning of our civic life.

The rebuilding of our cities needs not only material resources larger than can be provided on a local basis, but also resources of spirit and social enterprise. It needs a town-and-country, and not a purely urban, vision; for towns should be made for the countrymen as well as for the dweller within their precincts. It needs an authority wide enough to transcend existing municipal boundaries and, wherever necessary, to redraw the map of local government. Moreover, towns need replanning in relation to roads, power-supply and other public utilities, and in relation to the probable future of industry, which is a matter that will have to be considered on a national basis, as an essential factor in a general plan of economic reconstruction.

On the other hand, the more we can avoid centralisation the better. It would be a disaster if, in the process of replanning our country, we allowed the institutions of local self-government to be swept away. But the way to preserve the vital elements of democracy in local government is not to persist in preserving the independence of areas which are quite unsuitable, but rather to create new units of democracy on a scale corresponding to modern needs. Some sort of Regionalism is the inescapable answer to this problem; and we have already the adumbration of a regional system in the offices of the Commissioners who preside over various emergency services from their new-made provincial capitals.

This wartime Regionalism, however, lacks at present any democratic basis. The Regional Commissioner is an appointed person, chosen by the Government, and round him are grouped not representatives of the regional community, but delegates from Whitehall, sent by the various departments with rather uncertain powers and functions, except that they are to take over in the event of the country's unity being broken by invasion. The problem is to convert this war Regionalism into a democratic system of regional government in time to make use of it for the essential tasks of reconstruction. It will not do to treat the existing M.P.s for constituencies within the Region as the nucleus for a regional Parliament; for that was not what they were elected for, nor are they at all suited for the job. A regularly elected Regional Authority can hardly be created in wartime; and a mere assembly of delegates from local Councils within the Region would be both unrepresentative and likely to perpetuate rather than correct the existing meaningless chaos of local government areas. Probably the answer, for the time being, is to be found by creating some sort of Regional Council made up of representatives from a wide variety of bodies—Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies, Churches, educational bodies, as well as local authorities—and to give this Council at the outset only advisory functions under the Regional Commissioner, but to allow it to choose men who will sit with the regional representatives of the central departments on a sort of Viceroy's Council under the Commissioner as chairman and chief executive authority.

Even if this is done, it is evident that the Commissioners' Regions are too large to serve, for most purposes, as the units of civic government. Certain services require Regions fully as large as these; but there remain many services which can be controlled democratically only if the area of administration is a great deal smaller than the Region. It must, however, even if it is smaller, be an area that has some meaning. It is merely absurd to have what is in effect a single town or city cut quite arbitrarily into separate bits for civic administration. The division between Brighton and Hove, or between Manchester and Salford, has no meaning in relation to any of the essential problems which need to be faced. It is merely historic; and this is one of the instances in which history is a nuisance.

But there are boundaries in English local government which not even history excuses. Nothing could well be less historic than a suburb, or less calculated to excite the civic sense. Not only round London, but round every great modern city there are administrative areas which are—administrative areas, and nothing more. Nobody loves them: nobody feels, in belonging to them, a sense of civic pride. They merely are—unwilled, unwished, unproductive of any social sentiment—agglomerations of brick-boxes which not even a sense of danger can stir into any sense of community. They are not entities, but excrescences, without independent life of their own. Yet they fight for independence, because they fear that absorption into the cities from which they have spawned may bring upon them the burden of helping to maintain the common services of these cities. Their sole merit, as administrative areas, is that their rates are low. In them, neighbour knows not neighbour, and hardly anyone knows or cares who is alleged to represent him on the Borough or Urban District Council. They are without theatres, halls—often even without pubs. They house men and women as utterly divorced from social ties and sense of community as men and women have ever been.

To respect these areas as standing for the spirit of local self-government is absurd. They need absorbing into the towns in which their inhabitants work, shop, and amuse themselves. If something smaller than the urban areas as a whole is needed to express the feeling of neighbourhood, let it be something much smaller than these sprawling suburbs—something small enough for each inhabitant to know every other by name and sight. Between the true neighbourhood group and the whole city there is no intermediate unit through which the spirit of community can be expressed.

This indicates the need for a great removal of boundary stones—a great resettlement of the local government of our country. This question lies at the root of all planning that has the achievement of democracy as its aim. But at present nobody has power even to approach it. Lord Reith cannot, without stepping outside the terms of his appointment; for he is limited to "physical" reconstruction. The Ministry of Health cannot; for it is inhibited by tradition, and tied down by the narrow ordinances of the existing laws about town-planning. Mr. Arthur Greenwood cannot—unless indeed he becomes, instead of a mere "Minister without Portfolio" and without a Civil Service to do his bidding, a Minister of Reconstruction armed with effective co-ordinating powers. Yet, unless the thing is done, the whole policy of making the new Britain is bound to be conceived amiss. The Ministry of Works and Buildings will plan for one thing;

the Board of Education for another. The Board of Trade will go on its way regardless of what is in contemplation at the Ministry of Health; and the Regional Commissioners will be continually at loggerheads with everybody else, because they represent nobody, and have no effective co-ordinating authority.

But, surely, it will be objected, all this can wait until we have won the war. Do those who use this argument realise how long it takes to build a power station, or even a main road, or how impossible it is to plan the future location of industry without planning power supply, houses, and a host of other services in connection with it? Do they realise that already, on the blitzed sites, shanties are rising without a plan, and claims being staked out to rebuild the very nuisances which bombing has helped to sweep away? Reconstruction will not wait: it is being begun now, and nothing can stop it from being done badly, except a determination to attend to it promptly and aright.

THE BLITZ IN THE PROVINCES

THE tactics of the Luftwaffe's spring offensive against Britain's civilian population are now painfully apparent. The Nazis are relying on "Coventration"—the converging of waves of bombers on a single town or district, the sudden and relentless smashing of a limited area and the concentration of terrorism. They usually "improve" upon Coventry by following up on a second night, like kicking the victim they have stunned. They switch from one provincial town to another, and then, as on Wednesday of last week, return to London with an increased violence, so that the services of every town have to be constantly at their action stations. These tactics are not surprising, except to those who deluded themselves with illusions of mythical immunity, for we expected the Luftwaffe to transfer its attacks when, after weeks of sustained battering, it was obvious that London could not be smashed, either militarily or morally. Yet, as THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION readers may recall, when I went into the provinces before their time came, and with first-hand experience of the lessons of London, examined their preparations, it was still possible for the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Sir Patrick Dollan, to write in the letter columns, reproaching my anxiety, that:

> It is unlikely that raids on Glasgow will be as fierce or prolonged as they have been on London and other parts of the South of England. There are physical and scientific reasons for this.

The Nazis have now been to Clydeside. And so have I and have seen tragedy as bad as anything to be found in London, after weeks of bombing, or in Coventry after its night of horror. Street upon street of working-class tenements have been smashed. The vista of desolation moved me in a way which I thought was impossible after I had been annealed by the sights of damage I have seen. Tall tenements, rent, riven, gutted and demolished are worse to look upon, because they are the hive-homes of working people, than the spectacle of wrecked Civic Halls and public buildings; it is rather like the cottage homes of the East End being stacked in tiers. For nine hours one night, and over five hours the next, the bombers tipped destruction, mainly upon one district, although tenements over a wider area were also destroyed and even surrounding villages smashed.

The people were magnificent. That phrase has become almost trite, but it was never more true than of the workers of Clydeside. They gave the answer, not only to the Nazis, but also to those of little faith who have been saying consistently that "Red Clydeside," ridden with defeatists, would crack. They had very little understanding of the temper and temperament of the Clyde worker. He is a prickly, awkward, opinionated cuss who won't be driven, like the Glasgow transport workers who voted solidly against driving through the blitz—and then drove through the blitz! No one who saw the men, women and children of Clydeside after their agony could fail to be roused to admiration. A clergyman who handled six thousand of them at a rest centre told me that, of them all, only one man had shown even bitterness. All of them had shown courage and quiet fatalism. I can certainly vouch that, during the days I spent among the homeless, I found plenty who could even joke about their personal experiences. Yet it had meant to many of them standing huddled for nine hours in the "closes"—the entrances to the tenements which had been strengthened as shelters, but had none of the amenities of shelters. Not that amenities would have meant anything on such a night when the mothers and women had to make sandbags of themselves to cover the children. There was a philosophic detachment in their attitude, which was best summed up by a welfare worker who said to me: "Look at their faces." Their faces were drawn by their ordeal and grime-pitted by blast. "They look as though they had heard about a disaster—not as though the disaster had happened to them."

Any local authority which had to bear such an assault on the homes of the people, and it *was* on the homes of the people, would have found the burden too great. For a local authority does not consist only of "services." It consists of flesh and blood, nerves and muscles, in the shape of the personnel of the administration and the services. This personnel, with the key officials and the Councillors, were, in this case, among those who had to suffer and endure the blitz. Many of them had been on duty. Others had lost their homes. All of them had been worn out, before they had to tackle the aftermath and the care and migration of the homeless. Yet there is no doubt that this local authority was not fully prepared. How often did I hear that remark: "We didn't expect to get it as bad as this!" There were reasons for recrimination, but there wasn't time. A great human problem in the shape of the homeless and other raid victims was clamouring for immediate solution.

But why was it possible to find, here again, the repetition of obvious failures which had been demonstrated abundantly by the breakdown in London? Surely they had already experienced by proxy what bombing meant? London should have taught them by trial—and what trial!—and error—and what errors!—what had to be avoided. Why should it be necessary to improvise after the event? Any authority which fails to take the warning from our past experience is, in addition to involving its own people in unnecessary sacrifice and misery, playing Hitler's game. It is treachery by default. It is a "gift" to the Luftwaffe, just as the City of London without its fire-watchers presented him with the Second Great Fire.

To take only the welfare side of the bombing of Clydeside, in the area of the main target authority the rest centres were cold, cheerless, unprotected, mullion-windowed church halls, without bedding, without hot meals and without a vestige of comfort, except the kindness of the helpers. It was left to individuals without material help to comfort and cherish the victims and they did a good job. On the third day after the first raid a communal feeding centre providing hot meals was opened in a hall where the people had to sit with their plates on their knees in a cheerless, casual-ward atmosphere. Again, I ask why? Blitz apart, communal feeding centres are supposed to be a generally accepted ancillary. One thing which saved the day as far as feeding was concerned was the abundant supply of mobile canteens for the civil population and the exhausted civil defence workers. That much had been learned from London's deficiencies. Glasgow, for example, was able to lend twenty-seven. With the risks of a repetition of the attacks, the rest centres were rapidly cleared. Transport was quickly available and the people were got out to the surrounding authorities. Many of them had scattered like the people of Coventry. They took to the hills. One warden, his head bandaged roughly after a severe scalp wound and his leg injured by his heroic efforts at rescue, helped to dig many people out of the debris, only to find that they were cut off from accommodation by fires and bomb craters. He marshalled his band and shepherded them to the moors where he kept them together in good spirits until help arrived. Necessarily the evacuees had to be taken far afield. It is to be regretted that many of the receiving authorities, in their complacency, were ill-prepared. True, some of them were almost swamped by the numbers thrust upon them, but these were buffer authorities who should have foreseen, or should have been forced to foresee, that they would be "marshalling yards" for the stricken of such a target area. In one district which received a particularly large influx, everything had to be improvised. The schools which were to be the rest centres were still occupied by pupils at midday when the news that they were to be needed meant hastily abandoned classes. Rest centre welfare committees were hastily convened and were still haggling when the first evacuees arrived. It was the teachers who saved the day. In one big centre a language master took command. With his colleagues and with the help of the pupils they had been teaching a few hours before, they prepared some sort of reception for the homeless, a reception which was at least human and kindly, despite the fact that there were no proper arrangements for feeding them and no mattresses, although blankets were sent in. The teachers and the school-children went round with clothes-baskets to the housewives of the district and "scrounged" cups, plates, cutlery and even food. They helped to prepare meals. Even on the first night, with the help of the Ministry of Information Film Unit, they gave a film show which diverted the homeless, and organised a concert. After three days, I found this language master had not had his clothes off and had been working constantly night and day. The Colonel of the local garrison, off his own bat, volunteered to feed as many people as the rest centres

failed to feed. His men welcomed the chance and, while the Army cooks dished up first-class meals, the soldiers served the homeless and, since many of them had lost everything, provided them with soldiers' woollies and comforts.

One could go on cataloguing similar instances, but they all add up to the old story. The central authorities in Scotland seem to have had a good deal of foresight. When Mr. Tom Johnston, M.P., now Secretary of State for Scotland, was Regional Commissioner, he sent key men to London to study the problems under blitz conditions. And when the blitz thus struck Scotland, departmental representatives from Edinburgh rushed to Clydeside and helped to reorganise. Some of the Ministry of Information representatives accomplished feats of healthy irregularity. Their job was "morale" and to maintain it, they poached on every other official's preserves when human need and urgency demanded it. One of their self-appointed jobs was to see that the workers, who came back to work with sturdy dourness, after they had seen their families placed, were fed and found shelter. They met the workers at the gates and asked where they proposed to sleep. The replies they got was the "What-the-hell-business-is-it-of-yours" kind, but they persevered. One thing they found was that most of these workers, ignoring official assistance, had picked air-raid shelters for the night—some of them beside wrecked houses, or abandoned Andersons. The Scottish M.O.I. did its best to reason with the ridiculous censorship and stupid "security" arguments. The authorities in London had, by a series of misunderstandings, issued communiqués about the Clydeside raids which had minimised the seriousness. Then they persisted in "playing it down." They emasculated factual accounts, insisted upon the anonymity of the actual locality, and resisted even statements that compared the effects with Coventry. Nothing could have been more calculated to upset "morale." There was no doubt about the resentment which the people who had endured the violence of the blitz felt. They saw it only as official callousness; they lost faith in communiqués; they blamed their newspapers. As for the rest of the country, the first official admission it got of the severity of the attack was the announcement of "500 killed and 500 seriously injured." Who was to blame for this official obtuseness?

Once again there was an overwhelming argument for a Regional Welfare Board. There can never be uniformity in the preparation for receiving and billeting homeless air raid victims so long as it is left to a patchwork of local authorities of varying sizes and resources. There must be a common administration over the "catchment area" into which the homeless are liable to flood. Every town and village ought to be made to understand—and you can't do it by circulars—that it isn't an act of grace to receive the homeless from a "rival" authority, but that they themselves are directly involved in any attack on the common unit. To achieve this organic whole, they must be represented on a unifying authority.

Another need which was impressed upon them by the exhaustion of the personnel of the target local authority was that there should be a "shadow local government." There ought to be squads of trained officials, seconded from other local authorities, with experience of air-raid aftermath, who could be mobilised like a fire brigade, almost, and rushed in to relieve temporarily those officials who had been battered by the raid itself. In an incoherent way, that is what happens when the Government departments or the Regional Commissioners follow up a raid, but "mobile local government" should be available as a relief squad without implied reproach or supersession by default.

There is a third need which becomes the more clamant as each successive town is attacked. In London, after the first crippling confusion, there was time to organise reinforcements, to call upon the reserves of other authorities, and of the Army, to muster equipment and to borrow transport. For civil defence, for rescue work, repairs and restoration, London, facing a sustained blitz, could look to the rest of the country for help. As the blitz flickers from one part of the country to another, catching one authority after another, in varying states of unpreparedness, there ought to be a kind of garde-mobile of essential services and personnel—rescue and demolition squads, mobile kitchens and other indispensables—which would be drafted in instantly. They would be seasoned experts. They would serve the dual function of being part of the reserve of their own localities and yet be earmarked for long-distance work. As it is, this kind of service has to be improvised with each new situation. Sir Patrick Dollan in the Glasgow *Sunday Post* has issued an urgent appeal to all towns—

> "Fundamental lesson is—Prepare for the worst you can foresee. Then add to your preparations. Organisation of one town should be co-ordinated with that of neighbouring towns and districts. Any weak spot in Clydeside arrangements was due to lack of co-ordination. Get rid of red tape. . . . There should be one system of local government for the Clyde valley. Glasgow's resources should be at the service of every district.

This has a familiar ring to readers of this journal. After all this is the seventh month of the blitz. We are still in the stage in our civil Staff Work that our military experts were before Wavell showed them how.

RITCHIE CALDER

A LONDON DIARY

A FORTNIGHT ago I ventured to doubt whether the authorities could maintain the morally rotten position occupied by the B.B.C. Governors. Mr. Churchill apparently agreed that the position was untenable and carried out the evacuation with his usual skill and good humour. His jokes about pacifists who might sing *Deutschland über alles* or play flat as a sign of defeatism were second-rate enough. But they served two purposes. They eased the difficulty that always arises when the Cabinet makes concessions which are implicit condemnation of officialdom and they prevented too much awkward discussion of the principle at stake. The official ban against Michael Redgrave, Beatrix Lehmann and the rest is removed—which is an important democratic victory. But we are not promised the chance of hearing Sir Hugh Roberton's choir nor is there any ruling that forbids ordinary B.B.C. employees from being victimised for their political opinions. However, we note with gratitude that the logic of Mr. Churchill's statement is clearly that the present B.B.C. Governors are not fit for their job and the next objective should be to obtain a sensible Board of Governors whose minds are not bounded by the confines of the City and who understand that we are fighting to get rid of Fascist principles, not to establish them here. Mr. Duff-Cooper's statement in the House on Tuesday foreshadows new Governors.

* * *

The *Times* thinks the moment opportune for a whoop of triumph over what it calls "the Eclipse of the Highbrow." (Eclipses, one is glad to remember, never last more than a few hours.) The Highbrow, we learn, is usually deficient in endurance, unselfishness and discipline; moreover, talent in art is ineffective if its possessor does not cultivate these virtues. Both premises seem to me erroneous. At least I have never noticed that my highbrow friends are more cowardly, more selfish or less self-controlled than my lowbrow friends. At the same time it is true, if not edifying, to remark that many men of genius have been conspicuously lacking in the stoic virtues. I recommend the author of the *Times* leader to re-read—or should I say read?—the Lives of Marlowe, Bacon, Dryden, Pope, Boswell, Byron, Coleridge, Shelley and Turner, to say nothing of mere foreigners like Villon, Rousseau, Schopenhauer and Baudelaire. The author of the *Times* leader goes on to suggest that the "highbrow" painters have been responsible for a diminished interest in pictures during the period between the wars. No one better than the admirable Mr. Marriott, who after many years has so regrettably ceased to be the *Times* Art Critic, could put him right on this point. For one of the most encouraging features of aesthetic life here during the last twenty years has been the prodigious increase in the number of exhibitions of painting and in the number of contemporary pictures sold. It is doubtless to be expected that a war should provoke the Philistines who have been lying low into asserting their preference for what is mediocre. But it is a little surprising to find the *Times*, the art criticism of which was for so long outstandingly good, giving its blessing to such sad nonsense.

* * *

I wonder what people mean by "Bloomsbury"? I asked myself as I looked at the dismantled flat. Certainly it is no longer what Margaret Irwin used to describe in the 'twenties as the place where "all the couples were triangles and lived in squares." Whatever it was once, it is gone now. Perhaps Göring, whose hand always went to his revolver belt when anyone mentioned culture, had a special down on Bloomsbury? Anyway there have been quite a lot of incidents since the Blitz began and no particular sign of the decadence among this varied population that the *Times* seems to expect. The last incident blew the windows of the flat in; the furniture has long been taken away. But the walls are still lined with books, the fireplace is still intact, with its painted design by an English artist who (Bloomsbury or not) is one of the few whose work is nationally known. As happens to old houses, the atmosphere clung to the place in spite of bare boards. Bloomsbury was after all one of the few sources of serious literary and artistic achievement in the country; and once, long before my day, this house could have been described as the very centre of Bloomsbury. Several books were written in it, including, I think, *Lady into Fox*

(a good book, surely, even if born in Bloomsbury). But this house was still better known for publishing books; some of those who most disparage Bloomsbury used to subscribe eagerly for its productions. In my time Bloomsbury had changed its character, and the gatherings I recall in this flat were rather political than literary. One forces itself back into my mind to-day. Five years ago, March, 1936, Hitler entered the Rhineland. Edgar Mowrer and Knickerbocker came over from Paris to persuade England to back the French and turn the Nazis out of the Rhineland. Mowrer was vehement and Knickerbocker cynical; Herbert Morrison took part and many others who are not now regarded by the *Times* as mere playboys lacking—what is the phrase?—"those stoic virtues which the whole nation is now called upon to practice." Looking back I see that that was the crucial moment for stopping Hitler without war.

* * *

There they stood, in rows, the familiar volumes that belong to a period when one could still lecture about the past and theorise about the future. On the top, seventy volumes of Voltaire in faded calf; the whole lot only cost me fifteen shillings. But then Voltaire went through scores of editions and sold millions of copies. He was only a journalist, perhaps the greatest who ever lived. He had no faith in the human race; without illusions he yet knew that it was his job to attack cruelty and clericalism, and tyranny and war, and to expose shams. Next to him is d'Holbach, the complete and dogmatic materialist, and Helvétius, who thought that men were all born alike, rational beings without inherited dispositions. And near by stands John Stuart Mill, the great apostle of democracy, who yet saw its limitations, and Robert Owen, who was British enough to believe that you could get Socialism by explaining to royal persons, employers and the like that co-operation was better than competition, and the Webbs, who thought that State Socialism would come without danger to democracy because Parliament and the Trade Unions and the co-operatives would look after the interests of the producers and consumers. And on the shelf below are Marx and Lenin, who regarded freedom as a mere function of the economic order, and foresaw with surprising clarity the evolution of Capitalism and the struggle of classes. What they could not see was that the technical changes which would be necessary when international capitalism broke down might be carried through by the capitalists themselves without a surrender of power to the Proletariat; they did not foresee that the workers would become more and not less helpless with the growth of a large-scale production and development of a powerful salariat and the mastery of the technique of propaganda by ambitious men. They could not prophesy a monopoly State running the world in the interests of people who minded far more about power than about money. And on the bottom shelf a row of bound volumes of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, written by the lesser descendants of Voltaire and Robert Owen and Marx, by people who wanted both liberty and equality and spent their lives looking for ways of changing society without violence, of planning without dictatorship and of winning economic and political freedom at the same time. There they stood, these records of men's mental struggle, waiting to be carted away, not to safety, but at least to a shelter where the rain did not beat through the shattered windows. They are worth saving; one can no longer wander along the Quays at Paris and pick up cheap editions of Voltaire, and Hitler has destroyed more books in the Fire of London than he did when the Nazis burnt the finest achievements of German thought in the streets of Berlin. But the destruction of books matters comparatively little; it is a destruction of the minds which could have read them that is the real crime of the Nazis. In England one may still read Voltaire and even Marx and Mill and THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

* * *

I am thinking of starting a competition for the largest number of inaccuracies made in any one statement. I am beginning the entry with a remark of my own about the origins of Greek freedom: 1821 is 120 years ago, not a hundred; Germanos, as I well knew, was an Archbishop, not a General; he came from Patras; it was however not there that he raised the cross (not the flag) of revolt. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Benjamin and Irene Livingstone.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Four-room bungalows costing about £130 each are to be proposed as temporary homes for bombed-out people. As these bungalows would not be a satisfactory form of housing in a post-war era, it will be suggested that they be utilised for old-age pensioners after the war.—*Daily Mirror.*

The controversy over the B.B.C. signal has again arisen. Why not have the roar of a lion? I should imagine this is universally known and popular.—Letter in *News Chronicle.*

After building "the finest air-raid shelter in the country" at a cost of £24,000 in the garden of her mansion overlooking Torbay, Mrs. Ella Marion Rowcroft, eighty-one-year-old millionairess, has died without using it. . . . A lift took us more than thirty feet down below the ground into a fifty-yard-long corridor with rooms opening out on each side. . . . Then we went into the bedroom the millionairess had planned for herself. . . . At the head of the bed was a bronze plate with the words: "Angels are watching overhead. Sleep sweetly, then. Good night." . . . The bedroom had shaded lights and let into the walls were copies of paintings in the mansion. These pictures of seaside scenes could be illuminated by pressing a switch.—*Daily Express.*

NEW WORLD

WE bring fresh hope to souls that grope,
We are shaping an Order new,
Not a set blue print, but a gleam, a hint,
A bright though distant view.
Our shining vision will gain precision
Our Order will not seem strange
For we lead the movement for mass improvement
With the minimum social change.
No vested claims confine our aims
Our flights will not be retarded,
Yet all secured and all assured
Their interests will be safeguarded.

Our fruitful use of the Party truce
Will fashion a national unity
Which will clearly show that the *status quo*
Means the good of the whole community.
All wealth will pass through every class,
Each class will aid its neighbour
And all be planned by the Tory hand
With the joyful assent of Labour.
Our task is wrought with toil and thought,
The planning of State and City
Is not the scoop of a rebel group
Or a crank post-war committee.

And more and more on wrecks of war
The Order we bequeath
Is a realm of light in Europe's night—
A City not built by Reith.
Though still locked fast in the arms of the past
The future we behold,
And when men see, once more set free,
The brave new world we mould,
None after all will then recall
The mess that we made of the old. SAGITTARIUS

RATIONS AND RACKETEERS

[The allegations in this article, sent to us by a lorry-driver, whom we have good reason to believe reliable, seem to require investigation.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

I AM a lorry driver, and in this capacity act as a sort of go-between for wholesalers, traders, jobbers, and others whose incomes are drawn from distributing food to the community. Not only do I carry goods, but frequently the manipulation of "on the spot" deals is entrusted to me if my various employers are not at hand. From first-hand knowledge, I can speak of devices employed by a large number of people to circumvent State controls and exploit an existing shortage of commodities, and I hope to explain the strange disappearance of various articles of food immediately upon the price becoming controlled.

Onions, for instance. It is true that many thousands of cases have arrived in this country during these last weeks. Every wholesaler must have had a quota. I observed five large cases of Spanish onions in a room to-day. Too valuable to be stored in the warehouse they were stacked and covered with sheets in the office. Even before these latest supplies arrived, during the immediate post-control period, when onions seemed entirely absent, I continued to handle them. True, they were usually concealed in small brown parcels and almost always handed to me with furtive instructions to deliver them personally to Mr. So-and-So "and for God's sake keep 'em out of sight." And so the genial Mr. So-and-So, who probably had never

handled an onion before, would take the parcel with amazing alacrity, tip me a shilling and deposit the treasure within his desk. The reason Mr. So-and-So got them, and not you, is interesting.

If certain merchants were permitted to make about 1,000 per cent. profit onions would be obtainable in most shops at some grotesque figure per pound. At the controlled price of 4½*d.* per pound they possess an insignificant monetary value, unrelated to their enormous scarcity value. Just to make a copper profit on so rare an article is to many men in the business unthinkable. The following is a typical comment: "What a pity onions are controlled. . . . They'd be bringing a dollar a pound," the salesman moaned, "if women'll pay tenpence for a leek they'll surely pay a bob for an onion. Never mind," he aptly concluded, "onions'll buy what money can't. . . ." Quite true, they will; and that is exactly what they are doing.

The wholesaler releases part of his onions to customers on condition they purchase less quickly disposable lines such as potatoes, cabbage and other goods that keep going his normal trade. Occasionally, if the onions are not very sound, he may dispose of a whole case to a single customer, at a price well above the official control. The retailer is assured of ample return simply by popping an onion into a customer's shopping bag and charging 4*d.* The customer is usually so delighted she does not mind paying what may be treble the legal price.

Perhaps I could mention a recent report of a Food Executive Officer, who referred to a complaint of a greengrocer that he had been asked £5 a case for onions, whereas the controlled price was 34*s.* a case. The trader was not prepared to make a formal statement, because of his fear of being victimised. I may add that more cases of onions have been sold at £5 than at 34*s.*

The vast barter racket, wherein money plays only a subordinate role, is an even greater evil. To be in this game one must have access to a scarce commodity. It has been my experience that onions have held the top value in this interchange for some time, but now such articles as cheese, rabbits, eggs, and chocolate are rising in the scale.

This traffic thrives on a large scale, including the exchange of cases of butter, lard-compound, sugar and meat. On one occasion I witnessed a deal which included the onions on one side and petrol coupons on the other.

"The brown parcel dodge" is the method concealing the esoteric swopping amongst those in the trade. This is done in much smaller quantities but on a very wide scale. A butcher who supplies a restaurant may be assured of lavish quantities of butter and sugar in return for fixing the restaurant with extra meat. The extent and complexity of this interchange are difficult to imagine. Assistants in provisions may wangle rationed goods in return for rabbits, oranges or some other food equally difficult to obtain. This practice may seem harmless enough to those engaged in it; but it is a steady drain on our food resources, and unfair to those outside the ring.

There are other interesting price evasion tricks. Oranges are sold at the official price per case, plus a sum, usually about five shillings, handed over at the moment of sale, but not added to the bill. In the case of kippers, when there is a shortage, a charge of two shillings is often made on a worthless box. It is a matter of forking out, or else no kippers. One dodge with bananas was to demand an extra half-crown for "labour." I cannot suggest how this type of racketeering is to be stopped. I say merely what I have seen. W. J. N.

JAMAICAN PARADOX

AT this moment, when the Americans are about to start work on their naval bases in the West Indies, the grant of a new constitution to Jamaica comes as a remarkable and refreshing gesture. This new constitution is so democratic in spirit, that even the most captious must be content. The introduction, in one breath, of complete adult suffrage, male and female, in a country where barely 5 per cent. have had the vote; the reconstitution of the Legislative Council so that the elected and unofficial members, instead of officials and their nominees, overwhelmingly predominate; and the immediate introduction of significant reforms until the voters' lists and local government arrangements have been overhauled; all this must surely satisfy the people of Jamaica and give the Americans now entering the Caribbean a new aspect of British imperialism. When the proposals have been accepted by the Jamaica Legislature, this small island will have reached its political majority, and will be the only British Dependency other than Ceylon to have attained the goal of universal adult suffrage.

We in this country can claim some, but not all, of the credit for this advance. Jamaica has been awarded her new liberties not only, as the *Times* suggests, as a compliment to her devotion to Britain in the war effort, but because Jamaicans have demanded political freedom and been prepared to fight for it. Jamaica's political awakening is very recent, scarcely four or five years old, but in that short period there have been strikes, disturbances, bloodshed, arrests, a rapid growth of Trade Unionism, and the formation of a courageous and progressive political party. This is the People's National Party, founded in September, 1938, by Norman Manley, K.C., the leading barrister in the island. Manley and Bustamente, the Trade Union leader who is now detained under the Defence Regulations, emerged in the general strike of that summer as the two outstanding political figures of the country. The new Party has published an effective paper of its own; a few months ago it adopted a frankly socialist programme; and it has been working unremittingly for economic as well as political reform. Here is Manley, as the mouthpiece of the new Jamaica, demanding self-government before a wildly enthusiastic and excited crowd in Kingston, only two months ago:

> The great and overwhelming reason why self-government is imperative for a people is that without it, it is impossible to achieve real unity and impossible for the people of the country to develop and grow into manhood. The only test of the fitness of a people for self-government is their own demand for it, their own willingness to accept the responsibilities of it. (Applause) . . . I do not believe that there are principles which are good for one class of people and not good for another. (Applause.) I believe that what is good for the British is good for the Jamaicans, (Applause) and I believe that what is good for the upper classes in Jamaica is good for the masses in Jamaica (Cheers) . . ."

And here is the organ of the People's National Party, *Public Opinion*, writing on the new Government Savings Bank Bill and the Budget deficit:

> Embodied in the Bill is the old, old conception "that always at least two-thirds of the total deposits shall at all times be invested in the public securities of the United Kingdom, or of any British Dominion or Colony (other than Jamaica)" . . . In short, the Bill makes it impossible for the Bank to develop into a real powerful State Banking Institution and insists that the majority of its assets shall always be invested out of the island; on the other hand, it seeks to place at the disposal of the Government which has formulated it a large sum of money to help them to hide their failure to deal with our financial problem.

It is clear that Jamaica has been growing up with a rush.

Politically, therefore, Jamaica is to be recognised as an adult. But economically? That will now become the big question. It is 150 years since Jamaica knew real prosperity, the time before West Indian sugar had its rivals, and before the cheap slave labour of the sugar plantations was set free. But even then the country's wealth was canalised into one industry and owned by one small coterie, so that when the sugar industry suffered, Jamaica as a whole sank into decline. It revived with the new popularity of the banana at the end of the nineteenth century, but throughout these last decades it has led the same unbalanced precarious economic existence that has been the lot of all Colonial territories. When the world market was good, Jamaica's exports were in demand and wealth flowed in; when the world market was bad, exports suffered and the island was left resourceless. Jamaica could not feed itself, could not clothe itself, could not manufacture its building materials, could not provide itself with elementary household articles. Almost everything has had to be imported. Revenue has never been large enough to provide reasonable education and health conditions, unemployment relief, old age pensions —indeed, any adequate social service. The richer classes resisted an effective income tax, so that most of the revenue was drawn in indirect taxes from the poor. The Government drifted along aimlessly, aided by occasional grants and loans from Britain. There was no one to infuse vitality into the economic life of the country, and the condition of the people degenerated into squalor and destitution.

After the depression years of the early thirties, the already bad position worsened. Islanders who had been working abroad in the boom period returned home and swelled the large and disaffected army of the unemployed. The export trade seemed unable to recover its resilience. Breaking point came in 1937, when Jamaican workers went on strike, in harmony with similar strikes in the other islands. In 1938 trouble broke out again, and flared up into a riotous and for a time uncontrollable general strike. Official complacency was shattered at last. In the months that followed the Government launched out into various new enterprises—a land settlement scheme, an increase in income and other taxes to finance social services, the establishment of a Labour Department, a rise in wage rates. The Royal Commission came and saw and reported. As a result £1,000,000 a year was voted by Parliament for West Indian development and Sir Frank Stockdale has been sent out as Comptroller of Development to elaborate a plan of campaign.

But all this was only the beginning. The deep poverty of the people remained untouched, and when war broke out the economic problems of Jamaica were given a new intensity. External trade, which has always been the mainstay of the country's wealth, inevitably suffered badly. Difficulties of shipping and supply hampered imports from Britain, and increased their cost. Severe restrictions on trade with U.S. and Canada, in order to conserve dollars, prevented Jamaica from making good its deficiencies from North America. This might have provided the golden opportunity for expanding local industries, but the trade restrictions hampered the purchase of even the most elementary equipment.

The export trade has had an even grimmer time. The British Government did what it could by buying up the sugar output and part of the small citrus crop. But for years bananas have been the bulk of the export trade, and now banana imports into Britain (which represents about £2,000,000 out of a total banana trade of £2,500,000) have been banned. The British Government has again been generous. It is buying up a fixed quantity of bananas at a fixed price—but this is a low price and goes to the planter, while agricultural labourers, pickers, packers, lorry drivers, dockers, are bereft of employment and income. In the meantime, what is to be done with the crop? There is not much to be expected from the American market, which is already well supplied from South America and offers lower prices than Jamaicans are used to receiving. Perhaps alternative uses for the banana can be found—already it is being ground into meal and mixed with flour to make bread. It can possibly be dried and exported to this country, as the dried banana requires only 5 per cent. of the shipping space of the fresh. The Germans have eaten, and fed their stock with, dried bananas for years, and had introduced drying methods into the banana-growing Cameroons when it was still a German Colony. But while these matters are being considered the bananas ripen and rot, and the Jamaican Government has decided to distribute them free.

This has caused a new outcry in the island. At the outbreak of war, when the food position looked precarious, the Government had launched a Food Production campaign, guaranteeing prices and giving loans to cultivators who would expand their food crops. About £75,000 has already been advanced for this purpose, some crops have been increased, and the peasant producers are now finding themselves undercut by the glut of bananas. The Government also established a corn-meal factory to replace flour imports, and encouraged the local production of corn. This factory and its suppliers are also suffering, owing to the banana position. Jamaica is up to the eyes in bananas, and unless some practicable alternative use is found for them, in the end they will go, together with West African cocoa, to feed the tragic bonfires of surplus foods in a hungry world.

Since the war the Government has made one or two other efforts to help local production. A cement factory, a milk condensery, a few other enterprises have been set up, always hampered by the difficulties of getting machinery. But in spite of these efforts, and in spite of a heavy increase in taxation, the Budget cannot be balanced, and unemployment and destitution have been on the increase. The country has been so financially embarrassed since the outbreak of war that it has not been able to make any official contribution towards the British war effort, even though £150,000 was collected voluntarily for war funds. It is now rumoured that a special loan will be granted by Britain to make up this year's Budget deficit.

In recent months various new opportunities have been opened to the islanders. Batches of dockers have been sent to work in the Panama Canal Zone. Skilled craftsmen have been brought to Britain. R.A.F. recruiting has provided some outlet. But the one substantial ray of hope is the construction of the American naval base. This has already caused a great stir in the island, given a fillip to Trade Union membership, and resulted in attempts to unite the Unions into a Trade Union Congress. The conditions of work on the base are being eagerly discussed at special conferences, and every worker wishes to have a voice in fixing the wage rates. There is no doubt that the arrival of the Americans will mean a great deal, from every point of view, in the life of Jamaica.

One compelling fact stares out from this photograph of the Jamaican scene. Economically, Jamaica is frail and backward, and we are still doing no more than tinker with remedies. To this poor island political maturity is now coming. It was ripe for political maturity; it demanded it; and we certainly took the wise course in conceding it with such generosity. But let no one think this is the end of the story. Universal suffrage can be given with a stroke of the pen; but a universal reasonable standard of education and well-being, without which a vote may be as empty of good as a bubble, demands money, energy, work. We pass on now from the first task to the second. By the success of that, our good will towards Jamaica will ultimately be tested.

RITA HINDEN

AS FIT AS A FIDDLE

WHEN I read the other day that a *corps d'élite*, composed of men of exceptional skill and with exceptional powers of physical endurance, had lately been formed in the British Army, and that one part of the corps had already made a new record by marching sixty-seven miles in twenty-four hours, I was (as usual) amazed at the capacities of members of the human race. There is no use in disbelieving fairy-tales and stories of miracles. You will find in the end that most of them are true. The seven-league boots and the cloak of invisibility (which is camouflage)—how distant they seemed in our childhood! Yet to-day they have become matters of fact reported in the newspapers. Mother Goose flying through the skies on her broomstick no longer seems an incredible phenomenon, and the fantastic imaginations of Jules Verne have been outdone by more fantastic realities.

Still, those of us who are old enough to have lived in a world in which fairy-tales were still fairy-tales cannot help being continually surprised by these new records of human achievement. Sixty-seven miles in twenty-four hours! I would have taken my Bible oath a few years ago that this was impossible to men marching in Army boots. Rationalists may argue that there is nothing wonderful about it, since competitors in walking-races from London to Brighton have had accomplishments almost as good to their credit. But these feats of pedestrianism cannot be compared with marching. Walking races are merely running races with the legs kept comparatively straight. The competitor walks in streamlined clothing that is next door to nakedness, whereas the soldier marches under a burden of clothes and equipment under which I should stagger if I had to go no farther than from Ludgate Circus to Charing Cross. Not that I wish to diminish the glories of those glorious lunatics, the pedestrians. I have watched them arriving at the end of their feats near the Palace Pier at Brighton, and, looking at their exhausted frames, have wondered not only why they do it, but how they do it. I yield to no man in my admiration for them, but still more do I admire soldiers who can march sixty-seven miles in a day.

It was only last week that I was in an inn where some officers were talking enthusiastically of their men—mostly new recruits—who had just come back from a route march of twenty miles. Not a man had fallen out by the way. One man who was limping with what he believed to be a sprained ankle had been advised to drop out if he was "feeling bad," but he held on till the end. At foot inspection after the march, one of the officers said, many of the men were found to have blisters on their feet as big as pennies. But none of them had complained: they had all kept up with their fellows. It was characteristic of the human nature of these days that the officers were so lavish in their praise of privates who had only done what they, all young men, had done themselves without any symptoms of wreckage. One of them said that, during a route march, he always wore a thin pair of socks inside his thick socks, and that this, he thought, was a preventive of blisters. Perhaps it would be a good thing to provide every soldier with this thin pair of inner socks.

No matter what kind of socks I wore, however, I cannot imagine myself getting to the end of a twenty-mile walk. I once walked fifteen miles, but only once, when I accompanied my cousin Johnnie, who was taking a bull with a ring in its nose to pasture. And during the walk we frequently sat down on the grass by the roadside and tickled the bull to keep him friendly. Nowadays, I shrink even from a five-mile walk. I told one of the officers that I could not walk twenty miles to save my life. "Ah," he said, "but you must remember that walking's not marching." I suppose there must be something in this. The rhythm of marching in common obviously converts a body of men into a new unit capable of energy beyond the scope of most of the individuals composing it. "Those men," said the officer, "would have gone on for ever."

As I listened, I marvelled more and more at the physical resources of my fellow-creatures. My marvel was all the greater, no doubt, because never in my life have I had any physical resources worth talking about. Never did I excel in any sport that called for physical strength or skill. Excel? In such matters I was always the dunce at the end of the form. How, as a child at a party, I envied the smiling little coeval who could turn cartwheels on the drawing-room floor!

I never could stand on my head. I never could turn a somersault. I was sent against my will to a gymnasium, where I scrambled over the vaulting-horse like a baby walrus and did no better at the high jump than if I had been carrying iron weights round my ankles. I loved games, but was an incompetent at them all. I dreamed Rugby football—and still dream it—but, when I turned out in a practice game, I seemed to get more in the way of my own side than of the opposing team. I bought a football—egg-shaped, like the universe—and played violent imaginary games with it in the back-garden, but, though I could score the most amazing tries by myself, I never scored a try anywhere else.

It was the same with cricket. I adored the game and loved the very names of people who played it well; and I could score centuries easily enough when playing in imaginary games for Surrey against the wall in the backyard. But on the plane of reality my cricket never got beyond swinging a bat through the air and trusting to luck; and it was no use trusting to luck! Once, unless my memory is over-rosy, I did score five when playing for Balleney Second Eleven against Ballinteer Second Eleven; but Ballinteer Second Eleven was not very good. "When you're in form," an old cricketer said to me the other day in a reminiscent mood, "the ball's the size of a football, and you can't miss it. When you're out of form, the ball's the size of a dried pea. When Hutton made that record score at the Oval, he must have seen the ball as big as a football." I unfortunately never had the experience of seeing the ball as big as a football. For me it was always the size of a dried pea.

At lawn tennis I fared no better. We organised tournaments on my uncle's lawn, and, at the end of the season, I was always at the bottom of the list. My tennis was even worse, indeed, than my golf turned out to be when in later life I attempted that never-to-be-sufficiently-praised game. Nor could I run a race without being beaten or engage in a wrestling-bout without being quickly reduced to submission.

It might be thought that this record of consistent and ignominious failure would have destroyed my pleasure in physical prowess. After all, early failure as a mathematician made me indifferent to mathematics for life. Sport, however, makes a profounder spiritual appeal than mathematics. The beauty of physical skill, physical strength and physical courage appeal to common imagination as *a*'s and *b*'s and *x*'s, squared or unsquared, can never do. Who, if he sat down to write on the theme, "Let us now praise famous men," could conscientiously omit the names of great footballers, great cricketers and, for the matter of that, great milers? I agree that there have been still greater men, from Socrates to Sir Humphry Davy, and from Sir Humphry Davy to Mr. Shaw; but the loveliness of physical excellence is incontestable. The spectacle of it is of a piece with the world of the rainbow and the cuckoo's song, and the sounding cataract and all that the poets have praised. Some people say that it is decadent to be a spectator of games instead of a player. This seems to me as foolish as it would be to say that it was decadent of Shelley not to be a skylark and of Wordsworth not to be a green linnet. After all, they were merely spectators—and auditors of the birds they hymned. Some of us are cut out to be, not players, but spectators. In a small way and in regard to physical glory, I was one of these. Hence, I make no excuse for feeling that life is good when I see and hear of great physical feats. One does not need to be as fit as a fiddle to like the look of other people who are as fit as a fiddle. One can enjoy their strength, their balance and their swiftness by proxy. One feels envious, of course, but pleasantly envious. One rejoices to know, indeed, that in these small familiar islands to the west of the world are men, not in twos and threes but in troops, who can march sixty-seven miles in a day and make their ancestors look like weaklings. Y. Y.

FROM KAFKA'S DIARIES

[*Franz Kafka, the Austrian writer, who died in* 1924, *has had an important influence on European literature. Five of his books have been published in English, of which the best known are the novels "The Trial" and "The Castle." The following extracts are from his unpublished personal diary.*]

My development was a simple one. While I was still contented I longed to be discontented and with all the resources of my era and my tradition flung myself into discontent; then I wanted to turn back again. So that I was always discontented, even with my contentment. Strange that pretence, if carried out systematically enough, can become reality. My spiritual downfall began with childish play or childish make-believe. For instance, I screwed up my face and walked over graves with my arms crossed behind my head. A childish and disgusting but successful game. (The development of my writing began in the same way, though that development stopped later on, unfortunately.) If you can summon unhappiness in this way, it should be possible to summon anything. Much as my development seems to refute it, and much as the admission goes against my grain, I simply cannot allow that the first beginnings of my unhappiness were inwardly necessitated: they may have had a necessity, but not an inward one: they came upon me like a swarm of flies and would have been as easy to drive away.

* * *

When I think of it, I must confess that my upbringing has done me great harm in many ways. This accusation implicates a whole crowd of people, for instance, my parents, several relations, certain visitors to our house, various authors, a particular cook who for a year conducted me to school, a great number of teachers, a school inspector, people strolling past in the street; in short it pierces like a dagger through society and no one, I insist, no one, unfortunately, can be sure that the point may not suddenly appear before him at any moment, or behind him, or at his side. I will listen to no refutation of this charge. As I have heard so many already, and as most of them got the better of me, I include these refutations with my charge and assert now that my upbringing and these refutations have done me great harm in many ways.

* * *

In the last week I have had a collapse as complete as the one on that night two years ago; I can think of no third case. Everything seemed to be over, and even to-day I still feel this. One can understand the matter in two ways, or perhaps in both simultaneously. First: complete collapse, impossible to sleep, impossible to wake, impossible to endure life, or rather the sequence of life. The clocks do not agree; the inward one gallops on at a devilish or demoniac or at any rate inhuman pace, while the external one lumbers along as usual. What can happen but that the two worlds must part company, and they do part company or at least tear at each other in a frightful way. The wild speed of the inward process may have various causes; the most obvious is self-analysis which will not leave any thought to mature in peace but hunts it out, to be hunted out in turn, as soon as itself crystallises into a thought, by further self-analysis. Second: this hunt takes away one's human direction. The isolation which in great part has always been forced upon me, in part sought by me—yet what was that too but a forced choice—is now becoming quite unequivocal and making for its end. Where is it leading? It may—that seems most probable—be leading to madness; if that is the case there is nothing to be said; the hunt will go through me and destroy me. Or again I can—I can?—even if only to a very small degree, try to keep my feet, and in that way let myself be borne on by the hunt. Where will that take me? "The hunt" is only an image; I could also call it "Assault on the last earthly frontier," and an assault from beneath too, from humanity; yet I could equally well, since this also is merely an image, replace it by the image of an assault from above, directed down at me.

* * *

Without forbears, without marriage, without heirs, yet with a wild longing for forbears, marriage, and heirs. They all stretch out their hands to me, forbears, marriage, and heirs, but too far away for me.

* * *

The face of refusal which I encountered over and over again did not say: "I do not love you," but: "You cannot love me, much as you would like; you are unhappily in love with your love for me; but your love for me does not love you." Consequently it is untrue to say that I have ever known the words, "I love you": I have known only the waiting silence which should have been broken by my "I love you": that is all I have known, nothing more.

* * *

My father and mother were playing cards; I sat near by, quite detached; my father asked me to play or at least look on; I made some excuse or other. What is the meaning of this refusal to take part which has recurred ever since my childhood? I could have shared in social, even in public life through invitations; I could have performed tolerably though not well all that was required in return; even cards would not have bored me very greatly—yet I refused. This being so, I am wrong when I complain that the stream of life has never taken me to itself, that I have never been able to get away from Prague, have never gone in for any sport or handicraft, and so on—I should probably have refused the offer, just as I refused the invitation to play cards. I gave admission only to senseless things like my law studies, my work in the office, and later on to silly hobbies

such as joinering and a little gardening; in taking up these I acted like a man who drives a needy beggar from his door and then, all by himself, plays the benefactor by passing a few alms from his right hand into his left.

* * *

A few nights later I really took part by jotting down my mother's accounts for her. But no intimacy came of it, or if there was any it was stifled under weariness and boredom and regret for wasted time. It would always have been like that. I have very, very seldom stepped out of this borderland between isolation and society; I am even more firmly rooted there than in isolation itself. What a fine lively place Robinson Crusoe's island was compared with this.

* * *

An endless dull Sunday afternoon; an afternoon devouring whole years, made up of whole years. By turns walking despairingly through the empty streets and resting on the sofa. Astonished sometimes by the almost unending senseless passing of the dull clouds. "You are reserved for a great Monday!" "Well said, but Sunday will never stop."

* * *

I have always had a certain suspicion of myself. But this only happened now and then, in flashes, with long intervals between, long enough to forget about it. Besides, it was roused by trifles which other people too must have noticed without thinking anything of them: surprise at my face in the mirror, or at the reflection of the back of my head, or at seeing myself full-length, on suddenly coming across a mirror while walking in the street.

* * *

I was defenceless against that figure as she sat quietly at the table staring down at it. I kept circling round her with the feeling that she was strangling me. A third figure kept circling round me with the feeling that I was strangling him. A fourth kept circling round the third with the feeling that he too was being strangled. And so on to the revolution of the stars and beyond them. Everything felt the clutch at its throat.

* * *

Many people held that he was lazy, others that he was afraid of work. The latter were right. He was afraid of work. When he started a job he had the feeling of a man who is forced to leave his home. Not necessarily a home that he liked, but yet a familiar, known, secure place. Where will his work lead him? He feels like a shy young dog being dragged through the streets of a great city. It is not the noise that terrifies him. If he could hear the noise and distinguish the separate sounds which make it up, that would be enough to absorb all his attention at once; but he does not hear it; as he is dragged through the noise he hears nothing; all he hears is a queer silence which is trying to feed on him. And that is uncanny, that is terrifying and yet boring, that can scarcely be borne. How far will he get? Two or three steps, no more. And then, tired out with his journey, he will totter back to his home, his grey, unloved home. This makes all work hateful to him.

* * *

It has always been incomprehensible to me that almost anyone who can write finds it possible to objectify suffering in suffering, so that I, for example, while I am unhappy, with my head still ringing with misery, can sit down and write to someone: I am unhappy. In fact I can go further and introduce embellishments which seem to have nothing to do with my misery, using them straightforwardly or as a foil or with a whole orchestration of associations. And this is not a lie and does not help my misery; it is simply a grace-given surplus of power at a moment when suffering has visibly exhausted all my powers and is scraping at the last walls of my being. Then what can that surplus be?

* * *

I loved a girl who loved me in return, yet I had to leave her.

Why?

I do not know. It was as if she were surrounded by a ring of armed men with their spears turned outwards. If I tried to approach her I ran against the spear-points, was wounded, and had to withdraw. I have suffered greatly.

Was the girl without blame? I believe she was, or rather I know it. The foregoing illustration is not a complete one: I too was surrounded by armed men, whose spears were turned inwards, that is towards me. If I tried to reach the girl I was caught first on the spears of my own spearmen and could make no progress even there. Perhaps I never reached the girl's spearmen, or if I did, I was bloody and fainting with the wounds of my own spears.

Did the girl remain alone?

No; another got through to her easily and without opposition. Exhausted by my efforts, I looked on as indifferently as if I were the air through which their faces came together in their first kiss.

Translated by EDWIN MUIR

BEETHOVEN AND THE FUTURE

OF all great composers perhaps Beethoven presents the critic with the most prodigious of opportunities to say something true. Like the laws of a country, great works of art are not static objects: they are systems of communication—barographs which draw a different chart according to the mode of sensibility to which they are at any time addressed. It seems highly unlikely that the *Eroica* means to any of us to-day what it meant to Beethoven's contemporaries. The truth of art is creative.

But the man himself must always be our point of departure. What was Beethoven *about?* The progress of this particular pilgrim is mysterious (1) because he was exceptionally reserved and inarticulate, (2) because he chose to express himself in music, a language to which no one has yet succeeded in attaching a definite *verbal* meaning. Huge emotions—passionate yet ambiguous as colour in changing lights—glow out of the stream of sound: anger, exasperation (this very often and definitely), grief, an unsmiling tenderness, a steely joy; and over all these spreads a meditative rapture which is somehow felt as the essence of all music and is perhaps the nearest we ever get to the direct expression of disinterested love. But, whether momentary or of longer duration, the emotions that surge out at us from Beethoven's (or any other man's) music are all vague and generalised; moreover their connections are hard to perceive, for the human mind works in words and concepts, and any effort to sustain a double form of perception, and to interrelate the two, is not feasible. Beethoven's music tells no story and paints no picture; all one can say is that somehow we are made powerfully aware of a moral conflict. The rest is music; but when it has ceased to sound we find ourselves thinking again of the cryptic drama at which we have been assisting. For to a far greater extent than that of any other composer, Beethoven's opus is the history of his moral consciousness. Other composers' work (e.g., Schumann's, Brahms's) seems to grow out so to speak at right angles to their lives, whereas Beethoven's grows along with his and is woven round it. The last sonata shows him alone with the Universe: if I hesitate to say "with God" it is because of the vagueness that surrounds Beethoven's religious beliefs. That he possessed some is certain; that they were orthodox Christian is more than doubtful. A Radical in politics, he is likely to have been deeply heretical in religious matters. Yet what we can gather of his philosophy has this much in common with Milton's that the grim integrity, the irony and passion of his mind compelled him continually to be remaking his soul on the basis—not of Christian dogma, or of Kantism, or of some bogus political religion—but of the data of his conscience as an individual. Such preoccupations do not make for sociability or perhaps even leave much room for ordinary civility, and it seems clear that Beethoven's contacts with the reality of the outside world took the form of clashes, more or less violent, between a fairly accommodating environment and the fantastic preconceptions born of a hard, unfair childhood in an exceptionally obstinate and romantic heart. The result was what Mr. A. E. F. Dickinson, in his clever monograph, *Beethoven* (Nelson, 2*s.* 6*d.*), calls "his determination to be himself in the full sense"—a resolve which, it is safe to say, had not presented itself to any earlier composer in quite that form. Monteverde, Byrd, Purcell, Bach, Mozart, Haydn: all these were professional men who left the problem of their personalities to work itself out, as a natural concomitant of their careers. To them, as to the Wykehamist, manners made the man. But with Beethoven, at any rate from the *Eroica* onwards, each work marks a step away from musical good manners; a process which culminated in the *Grosse Fuge*. So that if his passionate individualism, as obvious in his conduct as in his music, was Beethoven's strongest link with the Romantic Movement proper, his position in the history of music has another and greater importance: he was creating a new tradition—that of "impolite" music.

How rude to his listeners Beethoven could be, any student of the later works, comparing their aural effects from those of the polite school (from Mozart to Debussy), can testify. Yet an examination of Beethoven's life reveals a deeper truth behind the rebarbative mask that glowers at the Queen's Hall audience from the Royal Philharmonic Society's unfortunate bust.

A cloudy veil stretches across the abyss of my nature. I have, however, no love of secrecy and darkness. I am glad to think that God sees through

my heart, and if any angel has power to penetrate into it, he is welcome to know everything that is there. Yes, and so may any mortal who is capable of full sympathy, and therefore worthy to come into my depths. But he must find his own way there; I can neither guide nor enlighten him.

I think most people would agree that that adequately describes Beethoven's heart; they may, therefore, be surprised to learn that it is in fact Nathaniel Hawthorne's account of himself. Two more arrestingly dissimilar men can scarcely be imagined; but in the resolution of the same profound stresses, two natures often achieve surfaces that are poles apart. The resulting difference, in the case of Beethoven and Milton (to whom that paragraph also applies), is far less great. Both men looked politically forwards; both were deeply committed to a revaluation of religious belief; in one blindness, in the other deafness did more than merely shut them into towers of rebellious egotism: these capital afflictions had, by the law of compensation, the effect, not only of reinforcing the image-creating faculty, but also of slowing down the tempo of experience until each facet of the spinning jewel was clearly perceived, so that, by the total subtraction of one sense, their minds achieved a technique of immediately getting to the roots of any personal incident—a system not so easily acquired by those whose organs all function normally. It should not then strike anyone as paradoxical if I point out how much there is of Milton's Satan in the *Grosse Fuge*, in the *Hammerclavier*—that monument to Pride, the Finale of which is, as Mr. Dickinson says, "the work of one whose passion for the accurate expression of his mind was tireless to the end"; and for the same reason I suggest that Tolstoy was justified in his fear of the Kreutzer Sonata. On the other hand, the strange, cool lyricism of *Comus* has its counterpart in the Violin Sonata in G, op. 96, while—to reverse the analogy—the Rasoumovsky Quartets and the middle period piano sonatas (the C sharp minor, the Waldstein, the Appassionata) translate *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso* and *Lycidas* into an even more purely musical form.

> Paradise, and groves
> Elysian, Fortunate Fields—why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of Man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these
> A simple produce of the common day . . .

Thus spake Wordsworth, purposely borrowing Milton's diction; the contemporaneity of Wordsworth and Beethoven, considered together with the former's avowed descent from Milton, may help to make my paradox more acceptable. Do not look, however, for the "groves Elysian" in the most obvious place—i.e., the Pastoral Symphony, for this is one of the composer's most impersonal works—an exercise in eighteenth-century landscape painting in the style of Thomson's *Seasons*, the German translation of which (done for Haydn by the Freiherr Van Swieten) Beethoven is sure to have known. Beethoven's very own Paradise is lost in the first movement of the Ninth Symphony and regained in the two last string quartets: in all these the "produce of the common day"—the sights and sounds of Nature—unite with "love and holy passion" to form a synthesis which in seminal power doubled the vocabulary of musical expression. To have done this implies, for the first time in history, an interest in orchestration for its own sake—i.e., as a means of expression and not as a more or less conventional method of "setting" music for an ensemble of instruments. It was part and parcel of Beethoven's view of art gradually to achieve the individualisation of each separate instrument; a process which has gone on ever since, until *Le Sacre du Printemps* started an attempt (pursued by the French post-war school and by the earlier Hindemith) to put the clock back.

Beethoven's treatment of any combination of instruments was no less revolutionary than that of the orchestra: in all cases the experiments were dictated by the composer's perpetual search for what Mr. Dickinson calls "a compelling communication"; but, more than all this, a glance at the genres in which he chose to cast his musical ideas reinforces the conclusion that, as in the case of Milton, it was the conflict between Good and Evil that underlay all his work and that gives it so specifically *human* a significance. For, with the exception of one opera, two masses, the songs, a few sets of variations, and single pieces of an occasional character, Beethoven's entire output is in sonata form; and that form, by virtue of the incredible malleability it eventually attained at his hands, the alternation and interaction and working-out—so essentially dramatic—of themes, the combinative possibilities of the movements, was and still is the finest medium yet devised for expressing the intrinsic situation of man.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

(To be concluded)

THE MOVIES

"No Time for Comedy," at Warner's
"Victory," at the Plaza

On paper, *No Time for Comedy* is one of the best light films of the year. The new "team-up," James Stewart and Rosalind Russell, looks as promising in its way as the early appearances of the Thin Man. Then the story is about a raw young playwright who comes up from the country with a satire on Park Avenue, and surprisingly it is a success: who could play the part better than James Stewart? He is good at coming up from the country and he is one of the very few authors on the screen who can make us curious about the books and plays he is supposed to have written. Rosalind Russell is the leading lady who proposes to him on a park bench at 4 a.m. and gets accepted. After marriage "success follows success," but then a fluffy discoverer of genius (Genevieve Tobin) makes him write a "serious" play and fall in love with her. His drinking, which began attractively, is now disagreeable. The play is a flop. "Dejected and disillusioned, Gay steps on to the stage of the empty theatre. From the rear of the auditorium comes the cry 'Author, author.' It is Linda, reaffirming her love for her errant husband." But for those last sentences in the synopsis which confronts every critic, one might have been tempted to leave at once and write an enthusiastic notice of *No Time for Comedy* on trust. Having waited, one wonders how the authors (three of them) and the director can have muffed their piece so badly. The acting is good (Charlie Ruggles, too, better than ever), there are amusing stretches of dialogue and, to begin with, the sentiment charms; but the whole thing fatally lacks conviction. We don't believe for a moment in the satire on Park Avenue or in the successes that follow; and this not merely because the plays themselves are kept well out of view. We don't really believe in the marriage or its falling out, or in anything else. With this drawback, *No Time for Comedy* gets along brightly enough till the end, which is realistically described in the sentences I have quoted.

Victory is a filming of Conrad's novel of the same title. What exactly is the "victory" scored by the recluse who retires to a tropical island with a young pianist rescued from a sinister hotel and after beating off an invasion of crooks realises that he is in love with her? The answer seems to be the current one of triumph over escapism: but one suspects there may be something more to Conrad's story and characters than that. Though as a film *Victory* seems to peter out in violent action, the action itself is exciting enough. The period—horse buses and romantic sailors of fortune, Fredric March as the recluse with Edwardian manners and moustache, the girls' orchestra playing *Zampa* in a hotel which nowadays would shelter a jazz band, and Miss Dietrich—is agreeably caught. Sir Cedric Hardwicke makes an impressive if rather stagey villain with dark spectacles; and Miss Betty Field has the right air of innocence for being rescued and for playing the piano by candle light. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

RAIN AND THE TYRANTS

(After the French of Jules Supervielle)

I STAND and watch the rain
Falling in pools which make
Our grave old planet shine;
The clear rain falling, just the same
As that which fell in Homer's time
And that which dropped in Villon's day,
Falling on mother and on child
As on the passive backs of sheep;
Rain saying all it has to say
Again and yet again, and yet
Without the power to make less hard
The wooden heads of tyrants or
To soften their stone hearts,
And powerless to make them feel
Amazement as they ought;
A drizzling rain which falls
Across all Europe's map,
Wrapping all men alive
In the same moist envelope;
Despite the soldiers loading arms,
Despite the newspapers' alarms,
Despite all this, all that,
A shower of drizzling rain
Making the flags hang wet.

DAVID GASCOYNE

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, March 28th—

British Drama League Week-end School, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Speakers include: Dr. Gilbert Murray, Dr. F. S. Boas, William Armstrong and Geoffrey Whitworth.

First of 6 lectures on English Cathedrals by N. B. L. Pevsner, Birkbeck College, 5.

SUNDAY, March 30th—

Anglo-French Socialist Conference, Royal Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, 10.30 and 2.30. Lunch at 1, at which the speakers will be Louis Lévy and Lord Snell. Tickets 3s. from Fabian Society.

Prof. G. E. G. Catlin: "The New Philosophy and the New Order," Conway Hall, 11.

K. B. Smellie: "Social Philosophy—Freedom," 17 Manchester Street, 11.

Prof. H. J. Laski: "Prospect of the Next Age," Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, 3.

Pat Sloan: "Russia and the Balkans," also Gramophone Recital of Soviet Music, 2 Keats Grove, 3.

MONDAY, March 31st—

Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch, N. Barbour: "North Africa and the Arabs," 12 Gt. Newport Street, W.C.2, 1.

TUESDAY, April 1st—

A. E. Appelbe: "War Damage," Housing Centre, 1.

Col. Rt. Hon. J. C. Wedgwood: "Parliament," Morley College, 6.30.

THURSDAY, April 3rd—

A Beethoven Concert by Vera Benenson, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, 6.

Correspondence

"THE OTHER GERMANY"

SIR,—In the article "Peace making" you have gone to the very roots of the present disaster. The late Rudolf Olden has published a book on this "Peace making" containing a chapter with the plain title "Foreigners Favour the Militarist Class" (*Is Germany a Hopeless Case?* by Rudolf Olden, Allen and Unwin, Ltd.)

And here there is one thing which cannot be passed over in silence: the Germany which might have set the helm to quite another course and saved Europe from a fresh catastrophe never received due support from abroad. This was true from the very day of the defeat, when in the armistice the representative of the German Army did receive some marks of condolence and sympathy from the representatives of a portion at any rate of the victorious armies, whereas the civilian who had placed himself at the head of the German negotiators, because he was ready to assume the most fearful tasks for his country's sake, excited only ill-will and antipathy. Enquire all over Europe, among the peoples which after the Great War wanted to establish a democratic order, or have actually done so! You will get the same answer everywhere: the diplomats and generals sent to us always dine with our enemies, hunt with our enemies, get their information from our enemies, and believe what our enemies say. Because our enemies, even if they were often murderers, were "Gentlemen." But we were no gentlemen, we were schoolmasters, manual workers, labourers—often even Jews. We did not speak the foreign languages, we held our forks wrong at meals, we did not know how to deal with lobsters and oysters. It was quite a subordinate consideration that we should have been glad to establish a peaceable Europe. Moreover, there was sometimes a gentleman to be found among us, an aristocrat. But that only made matters worse, because he was a traitor to his class and accordingly the other gentlemen, the real ones, told the foreign gentlemen, the diplomats and generals, when they all went hunting together, that that apostate gentleman was a gentleman no longer. What was the state of affairs in Central Europe in 1918? The Right had been struck to the ground, it was among the circles of the Left that those ideas for which the victorious western peoples stood found warm adherents.

Unfortunately the individuals who came to Central Europe to represent the west were themselves no friends to those ideas. Exceptions of course there were. I speak of the generality. This coloured the reports sent from Central Europe to the western governments and it strengthened the hands of those who had suffered a double defeat, in the war with the foreign enemy and the war with the enemy at home.

It really almost looked as if the upper class on one side was anxiously concerned to restore the half-destroyed upper class on the other side—the class with which it had been wont for generations past to wage war, to conclude peace, and again wage war. That at any rate was the appearance, and the appearance was enough to affect the subsequent course of things. Stresemann in his interview with R. H. Bruce-Lockhart foresaw with prophetic clearness this result: "He complained of the western Powers, and especially of Britain. He had won 80 per cent. of the German population for his policy, he told his English visitor. He had brought his country to the League of Nations. He had signed Locarno. He had given, given, given, until his countrymen had turned against him. 'If you had given me one concession I could have carried my people, I could still do so to-day. But you have given nothing, and the trifling concessions you have made have always come too late. . . Well, nothing remains now except brute force. The future is in the hands of the new generation, and the youth of Germany, which might have been won for peace and for the new Europe, we both have lost. That is my tragedy and your crime.'"

GABRIELL TERGIN,
formerly on the editorial staff of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

SIR,—If all Sir Robert Vansittart's long suppressed resentments against Germany are right, surely this is the wrong time to publish them? Even if there is only one per cent. of Germany anti-Nazi, good propaganda, as Goebbels knows, will encourage even a small fifth column. Propaganda which drives a wedge between the Nazis and the German people will make the remaining ninety-nine per cent. less Nazi. If the Nazi will to beat us down is strong, all the more reason for weakening it. Certainly the courage of German U-boat and dive bomber crews is often fanatical, and anything that undermines that fanaticism will help our convoys and save seamen's lives. Evidently some of our bloodthirsty armchair critics want, as in the last war, more mass "blood baths" rather than too easy surrenders. TEMPORARY NAVAL OFFICER,
(Somewhere at Sea).

SIR,—The controversy about "Black Record" leaves me comparatively cold. Dr. Goebbels can make out just as damning a case against ourselves by the same methods, also beginning with Tacitus on our common ancestors and ending with perhaps Amritsar or Jaffa. Those who attach to truth and objectivity a higher value than that of a temporary expedient must deplore Sir Robert's descent to such special pleading, but surely we should by now have learnt that the first war casualty is Truth, and that a war statesman must, to be successful, deceive himself and delude his people, according to the recipe in *Mein Kampf*.

Only let us remember, when the time comes, that such are not the men to have any hand in the terms of peace. SCOTT BAYLISS.

THE ALIEN PROBLEM

SIR,—I should like to enlist your and your readers' help in checking what appears to be some people's efforts to work up a new anti-aliens drive. The *Daily Telegraph*, after publishing an article last week on an aliens' camp in London written on lines as if it dealt with the Monkey Hill at the Zoo, to-day carries a report on the alleged reluctance of aliens ("Germans, Austrians, and Polish Jews") in two London blocks of flats to volunteer for fire watching, under a headline "Aliens Shirk Fire Watch." (I failed to discover a similar headline when some weeks ago there were in the papers reports on the poor response generally in large districts of the West-End of London.) It is just the way certain people started the anti-aliens drive of last summer, for reasons of their own which need not be discussed.

The facts are that as often as not aliens are in the greatest uncertainty as to what they may and what they may not do. I know quite a few who do not dare to possess a torch: they do not want to be mistaken for Fifth Columnists signalling to the enemy. I know a woman living in a village who on her daily way to work makes a detour of twenty minutes rather than cross the village square where there are mostly two armoured cars about. When I drove with an acquaintance of mine in a bus the other day, and the road skirted what appeared to be a minor airfield with three stationary 'planes, he literally grasped my arm and implored me to look in the opposite direction. I know some who do not dare to talk in whispers, and others who only dare talking in whispers. Others, utterly peaceful, utterly harmless, utterly loyal elderly ex-merchants or ex-professional men with nothing to their discredit but that they are Jews, are apt to start and grow pale like terrorist plotters in a penny dreadful whenever there is a knock at the door. Even if you succeed in convincing those wretched men (mostly released from internment because they are too old or too ill to join the Pioneers) that they may victoriously cross the jungle of police regulations, and be allowed to carry a bucket and a helmet and a torch all through the curfew hours, they will be poor fire watchers indeed. After the loss of economic security they had experienced somewhere else, they were last summer to experience a loss of "democratic security." It has not been restored so far; some sporadic efforts in that direction bear a painful resemblance to the attitude of a man who in the bus steps on a neighbour's foot, and then shakes him by the hand and says: "I forgive you."

The remedy is obvious. Restore that shattered security. Give them a status, and things will change at once. It is because of this that some of us are in favour of applying to all aliens, who after all share your fate, your food, and your bombs, exactly such measure of compulsion as is being applied to their hosts. If there exists in influential quarters a reluctance to employ them in the fighting services (though I do not see why), no conceivable reason for such reluctance can exist as far as the industrial labour schemes and the defence services are concerned. If you give them both compulsion and at least part of the corresponding civil liberties, if you tell them where they atand, you can be sure of their loyal, wholehearted, enthusiastic collaboration far beyond the limits of that fire watching in those blocks of flats.

It will, I submit, be a better alternative to those little newspaper articles with the big headlines. And it will, incidentally, furnish you with a happier alternative to the present internment policy.

Carbrook, ROBERT NEUMANN.
Long Crendon, Bucks.

LOOTING

SIR,—There is a type which, having taken a dislike to some other person, cannot believe that any simple or ordinary thing done by this person lacks scoundrelly intent. It is as innocent of applied imagination as your correspondent, John Grey.

Does he think that in peacetime persons who are imprisoned for the first time are not dazed to find that *This* has happened to *Them*? And that they are not bitterly (excuse a quoted phrase) "almost warped"? Is it so much less virtuous to snap up trifles during a peace than during a war?

He suggests that the Governor's distribution of cigarettes in prison—which appears to me as the kindly, and probably spontaneous, action allowed himself by one bound in official regulations—was a piece of Machiavellian face-saving.

The sentence on the St. Paul's bomb disposers was admittedly severe (though one seems to recall troubles earlier than 15s. worth of wet cigarettes), as were the others he quotes. But there is no topical novelty here: incomprehensible magisterial decisions have been, as have the poor on whom they mostly fall, always with us.

But, for the cases where some deterrent must be used, he offers no alternative to imprisonment—save the oblique suggestion that those who have had the bad luck to be caught looting should be enabled to buy themselves out of their embarrassing position by paying, if they can afford it, a fine.

It may be "a sin . . . to send to prison such men," but they must be sent somewhere—or go on looting, for it is understood to be a habit-forming occupation.

Finally, looting is not entirely from shops nor from wealthy homes. Indeed, sir, there would be a much greater swelling of your postbag by many trusty friends if it were conversely suggested that the authorities' methods are too timid to suppress completely looting from the bombed homes of workers. JOHN BEYNON HARRIS

22 Bedford Place, W.C.1.

RIGHT AND LEFT

SIR,—Mr. Kingsley Martin, in his review of *Mr. Churchill's Socialists*, asks: "Does Mr. MacAlpin think that there would have been no blockade, no starvation of women and children, if there had been an alliance with the U.S.S.R.?" I do think so, since such an alliance would have prevented the war, and that on the common people's terms. However, if one assumes, against the weight of evidence, that Hitler would have tackled both Britain and the U.S.S.R., the answer to Mr. Martin's question is: Britain would naturally impose a blockade and the Red Fleet would co-operate with the British Fleet. The Germans would also use the weapon of blockade. Men, women and children would starve, as they always do during a great war. However, I did not denounce "the British threat of a blockade" but the unctuous, gloating drivel that issued from the official Labour leaders as a result not so much of their desire to fight Hitler as of the fact that the Germans were not going to fight the U.S.S.R. These official leaders said that while the British people would have "inexhaustible supplies of food" (have they?) the Germans would starve. I said that such a threat would "give the Germans every excuse for backing Hitler" and this attitude towards the German working class showed the subjugation of the official Labour leaders to the point of view and policy of the British ruling class. This has nothing to do with pacifism and I have nowhere used a pacifist argument.

This is not all. Mr. Martin devotes more than a column to his review of my book yet does not mention its central theme, that the official Labour leaders have *all along* supported "our" Government in spite of their *apparent* opposition to Mr. Chamberlain before the present war. Mr. Martin appears to suggest that I "accept a Nazi victory." This is a libel. Anyone who reads my book will see that I believe the policy of the official Labour leaders leads to the triumph of Hitlerism here and I set out to prove that the present Coalition Government is a pre-Fascist Government.

MICHAEL MAC ALPIN.

FREE SPEECH AT CAMBRIDGE

SIR,—Mr. Graeme does his best to obscure the truth about what Mr. Lyth has called "organised and continuous interruption from groups of young athletes." The continuity at that particular meeting is a matter of opinion; though even the eminently respectable Mr. Graeme was not heard in perfect silence: but at other meetings it has been less in doubt. As for its organisation, which he has been careful not to deny, one of its leaders assured me a few days before the meeting that it was far better organised than anything we could do. That the interrupters were athletic lacks "evidence," perhaps Mr. Graeme would not accept as evidence the identification of the secretary of the University Rugby Club, and prominent members of various College Boat Clubs.

This "crypto-fascism," which refuses to let others speak, is the result of refusing to let oneself think; its existence in the interrupters of that evening was made plain by their readiness to take references to it as references to themselves. They are likely to provide a real menace to free speech in Cambridge, for they can penetrate into the colleges where the proctors' writ does not run; they have always provided it, especially just after the last war; and they always will, as long as their type of mind continues to exercise the Divine Right of money to higher education.

J. M. HUNTER,
Chairman, C.U. Labour Club.

SIR,—Mr. Graeme hints that the Undergraduate Council is not representative, by asserting that "there must be dozens of such societies not affiliated." There are twenty-eight bodies affiliated to the Council, including Mr. Graeme's own Association, and the Labour, Liberal and Socialist Clubs, and it is true that practically every university society that could reasonably be included in a representative body is affiliated. It is, of course, also true that many dozens of university clubs are not affiliated, but these, if Mr. Graeme named them, would be mostly of specialised interest, such as the Ballet Society, and the Film Society, or purely frivolous, such as Old School Clubs, and not interested in undergraduate life as such. There are only a few important faculty or political clubs not yet affiliated.

However, the Ballot has demonstrated the fact that there is a considerable body of opinion against the Proctorial Recommendation that the Proctors should have powers, in effect, to ban meetings. Thus it is proved that the Undergraduate Council really was representing the undergraduates, when it decided to question the Recommendation.

The Council is by no means oblivious of the case for the Recommendation. It has been appreciated from the first that sacrifices are necessary in wartime, and that the Proctors always have a difficult task to carry out. What the Council is concerned about is the vital necessity of maintaining the utmost possible freedom of speech in the University, and it respectfully opposes the Edict because it does not consider it absolutely necessary to give the Proctors power to ban meetings. It is a question of values. We would rather risk the scorn of the cheaper press, than the prevention of free discussion. Furthermore, the University is peculiarly adapted for preserving our national tradition of untrammelled political discussion, and it would therefore be particularly mistaken to suspend that tradition in Cambridge.

Finally, I should like to make a correction to the letter from Mr. Dunkerley, who succeeded me at the annual Elections two weeks ago. It is stated that over 50 per cent. of the undergraduate members of the University voted in the Ballot. The members of the women's colleges, though showing more responsibility, are not members of the University, and after their exclusion from the returns, only 45 per cent. of our undergraduates voted. I still think that this is very good. The women were included because the political clubs, which are the ones affected by the Edict, include women who have therefore as much interest in the matter as men.

The Edict is now expected to come before the Senate next term.

MARTIN LYTH. Ex-President,
Cambridge University Undergraduate Council.
Clare College, Cambridge.

SIR,—Professor Bernard Manning's letter is based on a quibble which is only too typical of the academic mind, and which can make no contribution to the matter under discussion. It is, of course, true that women students recorded their opinions on the desirability of the Proctorial right to ban meetings, and I have no doubt that Mr. Harold Dunkerley included these votes in the numbers he gave; but Professor Manning can scarcely fail to realise that the Proctors' ban has applied, and will apply, to societies and clubs in which women student members are on the same footing as "undergraduates" in the stricter sense, and that therefore the women's votes must surely carry exactly the same weight as those of the men, since they are affected to exactly the same degree. The only sphere of Proctorial jurisdiction from which women are entirely excluded is, of course, that of the University regulations, and embraces such matters as the wearing of gowns and squares after dark. Of these questions Professor Manning may be sure that the men will always be able to record their opinions without the intrusion of a single feminine voice.

Newnham College, SHEILA MCMULLAN.
Cambridge.

STATESMANSHIP IN CELLULOID

SIR,—Your contributor Mr. Paul Rotha makes a number of mis-statements, but I will confine myself to one relating to me personally.

I am at present Director of the British Council Film Department, having formerly been head of the Film Industries Department of the Federation of British Industries, Secretary General of the British Film Production Association, Secretary of the Newsreel Association and a Governor of the British Film Institute, upon which latter body I represented the British Film Production Industry. There is, therefore, no possibility of mistaking the identity of one of the persons to whom Mr. Rotha refers.

He states that I was called by Sir Joseph Ball to his aid at the outbreak of the war on his appointment to take charge of the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, and that I left the Ministry when that gentleman was replaced "after four months distinguished for inactivity." From these alleged facts conclusions are drawn which are scarcely intended to be complimentary.

May I point out that I have never been associated in any shape or form with Sir Joseph Ball, nor was I at any time in, with or under the Films Division or any other Division of the Ministry of Information. I did not, therefore, leave the Ministry in the manner or at the time alleged. M. NEVILLE KEARNEY

[Mr. Rotha writes: "I regret that I mistakenly attached Mr. Neville Kearney's name to the M.O.I. Film Unit; no doubt, his frequent presence in the Ministry was in his personal capacity." ED. *N.S.*

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

A SNOB is not infrequently the human being who beneath the public parade of one form of happiness attempts to conceal the gratification he derives from another. Thus a social snob may pretend that he enjoys parties because he is naturally and incurably gregarious, when in fact they serve to titillate a secret romanticism. The epicurean snob snuffs at vintages or collects fine editions not so much because he is interested in typography or fond of claret as because these tastes give him a delightful distinction among his duller acquaintances. A sexual snob (and there are more of them than one might at first suspect) is usually a power-addict disguised as a pleasure-lover. For the study of such a temperament and its various implications we have a brilliant and authoritative text-book in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.* One of the most original, certainly the most curious, of eighteenth-century novels, Choderlos de Laclos's narrative still enjoys a reputation for prodigious impropriety which is apt to blind a reader to its psychological virtues. Yet few novels with a predominantly sexual theme are less salacious. Though the situations depicted are exceedingly unconventional and the two chief characters cultivated specimens of extreme depravity, the accent throughout is on the pleasures of the mind rather than on the joys of thé body: the protagonists practise seduction in the spirit of virtuosos. Beneath the flurry and heat and palpitation of a passionate love affair they are in search always of the master-springs of the victim's conduct.

What makes the puppet move? Why does it exclaim and writhe? Both M. de Valmont and his counsellor and confederate, Madame de Merteuil, are intelligent analytical, cold, inquisitive, contemptuous of and yet fascinated by their companions' shortcomings. It is their pride to enjoy but never feel; the perversion they favour is to keep a cool head even in the transports of passion but at the same time allow their natural passions the fullest licence. Weaker mortals (they have discovered) have not this gift. Each is a snob, an addict of power, obsessed by the consciousness of his or her own personal superiority. Competitive professionals who have formerly been lovers (and might long ago have renewed the tie, were they not deeply and justifiably suspicious of one another's motives), they exchange advice and compliments, snubs and reprimands. Meanwhile, they range like elegant beasts of prey through Parisian high society. . . . But here it must be noted, as an interesting sidelight on the novelist's period, that, although Choderlos de Laclos placed the scene of his story in the capital and adjacent country houses, his subject matter seems to have been gathered from small provincial towns which he visited following his career as a captain of artillery. Not very much is known otherwise of the writer's life. Born at Amiens in 1741, he entered the service at the age of eighteen, achieved the rank of captain in 1778 and afterwards attached himself to the Duc d'Orléans. "*A cette époque*" (we learn) "*il fréquente le monde et il observe.*" No doubt in the entourage of an intriguing Prince of the Blood there was literary material of very unusual interest; and the Captain was an observer of uncommon aptitude. "*C'était un grand monsieur*" (writes Trilly in his *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire des Moeurs de la fin du XVIIIe siècle*) "*maigre, jaune, en habit noir.*" Such a portrait—in conjunction with Bailly's pastel: a broad prominent forehead and sharp eyes under contracted eyebrows—suits well enough with the idea of the novelist we have already gathered. Choderlos de Laclos was not a likeable but a remarkably perceptive man—quiet, precise, calculating, perhaps a trifle sinister, who saw a great deal and forgot nothing and harboured few illusions, but made up in clarity of insight what he lacked in warmth of feeling.

His view of love was neither sentimental nor weakly frivolous. Of that detestable ingredient *le sel gaulois* his masterpiece excludes the smallest sprinkling. The intrigues he describes may not be earnest; but alike in their origins and outcome they are extremely serious, dignified by grace and skill and deliberate villainy. There is seldom a smile and never a smirk through the whole extraordinary narrative. In a sense, Valmont and Madame de Merteuil are tragic characters. They have the right tragic concentration upon a single issue; this immorality is as definite and thoroughgoing as art can make it. One hastens to add, however, that they are not incredible. We may none of us have known a Madame de Merteuil as she is presented in her literary essence by Choderlos de Laclos; but we have many of us encountered men and women in whom the consciousness of possessing great attractions, and the satisfaction of preying on the feelings of others, have triumphed over all the warmer emotions and less inhuman instincts. What the sadistic Madame de Merteuil has learned by painful study she teaches in suffering; and a key-passage of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* is the heroine's account of the education from which she has evolved her talents. Even as a young girl she watched and analysed. Even her wedding-night at sixteen was an experience of which every moment was noted and recorded:

> J'attendais avec sécurité le moment qui devoit m'instruire, et j'eus besoin de réflexion pour montrer de l'embarras et de la crainte. Cette première nuit, dont on se fait pour l'ordinaire une idée si cruelle ou si douce, ne me présentoit qu'une occasion d'expérience; douleur et plaisir, j'observai tout exactement, et ne voyois dans ces diverses sensations, que des faits à recueillir et à méditer.

By comparison, Valmont is almost a bungler. "*Ma belle amie*" (he confesses, *à propos* of the siege he is laying to Madame de Tourvel) "*l'homme le plus adroit ne peut encore que se tenir au niveau de la femme la plus vraie.*" The relationship between an unscrupulous man and an unscrupulous woman, the instinctive sympathy that unites Valmont and Madame de Merteuil and the competitive antagonism that divides them—there is the real pivot of the writer's subject. Other characters, though admirably drawn, are incidental. Madame de Merteuil tries person after person, and finds them all unworthy. Together with Valmont she exists on a lonely height; and "*en vérité* (remarks her friend) *plus je vais, et plus je suis tenté de croire qu'il n'y a que vous et moi dans le monde, qui valions quelque chose.*" Most potential victims are such easy game as to be quite uninteresting. Madame de Merteuil's lover Belleroche is a fool and his devotion bores her; Prévan is attractive but a conceited nincompoop, and she has no difficulty in outwitting and humiliating that talkative seducer. Of Cécile de Volanges, fresh from the schoolroom, whom she assists in her prentice love affair with the Chevalier Danceny, the experienced woman of the world has at first high hopes:

> . . . elle est vraiment délicieuse! celà n'a ni caractère ni principes: jugez combien sa société sera douce et facile . . . sans esprit et sans finesse, elle a pourtant une certaine fausseté naturelle, si l'on peut parler ainsi, qui quelquefois m'étonne moi même . . .

She bends over the child's development as over the flowering of an exotic plant, only to admit some time later that she is gravely disappointed:

> Je me désintéresse entièrement sur son compte . . . elle dénote, surtout, une faiblesse de caractère presque toujours incurable . . . de sorte que, tandis que nous nous occuperions à former cette petite fille pour l'intrigue, nous n'en ferions qu'une femme facile. Or, je ne connais rien de si plat que cette facilité de bêtise: qui se rend sans savoir ni comment ni pourquoi, uniquement parce qu'on l'attaque et qu'elle ne sait pas résister. Ces sortes de femmes ne sont absolument que des machines à plaisir.

Valmont, nevertheless, is a man after her own tastes: an immoralist whose behaviour is regulated by a strict personal code:

> Encore plus faux et dangereux qu'il n'est aimable et séduisant, jamais, depuis sa plus grande jeunesse, il n'a fait un pas ou dit une parole sans avoir un projet . . . sa conduite est le résultat de ses principes. Il sait calculer tout ce qu'un homme peut se permettre d'horreurs sans se compromettre; et pour être cruel et méchant sans danger, il a choisi les femmes pour victimes.

—a strategist who piques himself on the elegance of his manœuvres:

> Jusques-là (he writes to Madame de Merteuil) vous me trouverez, je crois, une pureté de méthode qui vous fera plaisir . . . Jugez-moi donc comme Turenne ou Frédéric.

Alas, that even Valmont should have human failings! The discovery by Madame de Merteuil of her old friend's weakness—the account, elaborately detailed through a succession of letters, of how in the irresistible flashing course they run side by side, trampling underfoot hearts and hopes and lives and marriages, Madame de Merteuil begins gradually to draw ahead, and Valmont, in spite of his protestations, to flag behind, till one arch-cynic has as good as admitted that he loves the other—provides the real drama or true tragedy of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Laclos's age was a period of civil war between the heart and brain. It was the age of Rousseau (from whose *Nouvelle Héloïse* Valmont and Madame de Merteuil are fond of quoting), but it was also the age of Voltaire and Voltaire's progeny. It was tormented by the conflict of sense and sentiment; and from both sprang the vast upheaval of 1789 with its sentimental but murderous *doctrinaires*, its poetic patriots, its massacres and flowery thanksgivings and feasts of Reason. A copy of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, richly bound, bearing no title but embossed with the arms of Marie Antoinette, is preserved on the shelves of the Bibliothèque Impériale. The novel was first published in 1782; the novelist died as one of Napoleon's generals. Born among the fading lilies of royal France, he died amid the sphinxes and eagles of a new imperial Europe. Laclos's decline overlaps the youth of Henri Beyle. Together they are two great progenitors of the modern novel.

PETER QUENNELL

* *Dangerous Acquaintances* (*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*). By Choderlos de Laclos. Translated by Ernest Dowson. Introduction by André Gide. Illustrated by Chas. Laborde. *Nonesuch Press.* 15s.

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in his make-up. He has continuity; and he goes on unswervingly solidifying and deepening the foundations of his material. His temperament is meditative, intellectual, passionate; sometimes melancholy, but never harsh or gloomy. I think, too, he has great self-confidence. He has also a deep love of nature, a countryman's understanding of the seasons. The total of these qualities makes for consistency and balance. These are reflected in his work, which is never tortured or obscure, and which is distinguished by a cool and firm sense of form. Lyrics, particularly those of young poets, are apt to fall down in the last line or so, leaving the reader with a sense of slackening or failure of intensity; but his are always carried through and resolved completely.

One thing that strikes one is that he is a poet without colour: not in the sense that he is drab or insipid, but in that the effect is of whiteness, of clear light. His scenery and images are made out of clouds, wind, skies, coast-lines, lines of ploughland, water, gulls, larks, hawks: the general impression is of an almost abstract landscape of pure curves and contours.

He is a writer with a profound and happy experience of love, and some of the poems from his early volume *From Feathers to Iron*, dealing with the progress of love from marriage to the birth of his first child, are among the best he has written. These are serious poems; but he also writes light, gay, mocking love songs with a lilting Irish dance rhythm in them. The long poem about the flight of two Australian airmen is included in the selection. It is an extraordinary *tour de force*, but, to me at least, much less interesting than the shorter personal and philosophical poems.

The *Overtures to Death* poems, belonging to the period between the Spanish war and the present war, reflect the agitation, humiliation, and sense of helpless foreboding which was the mood of many at that time. Far away that time seems now, with its feverish anti-Fascist slogans and frivolous pro-freedom gestures; the dilemma of

> Whether to die
> Or live within fear's eye.

Mr. Day Lewis expresses that dilemma without romanticism or short-term pseudo-solutions. The poems of this period reflect frustration; but also the will and spiritual means to discard it and come to more honourable terms with life as well as with death.

Now, judging from *Poems in Wartime*, he appears to have left confusion and mental distress behind him, and to have rediscovered his peace of mind. The serenity is based upon the assertion of love, in the face of no matter what violence, as the indestructible principle of human life. "For me there is no dismay." Not that the attitude is smug; but there is a narrowing of vistas into the traditional landmarks and occupations of the local country scene; an un-ideological celebration of the virtues of simple country people—roadmen, farm-labourers masons—his fellows in the Home Guard. On guard against the invader is the key-note of the topical pieces. In fact, any political views about the war which Mr. Day Lewis may hold are absent from these poems. He sees the people of this country in broad terms of toughness, hope, patience; and says of them:

> Still they have made us eat
> Our knowing words, who rose and paid
> The bill for the whole party with their uncounted courage.

What, in the last analysis, makes Mr. Day Lewis a moving and a memorable poet is something that seems like a visitation of ecstasy which he receives from time to time, and which raises his imagery and language to the plane of a mysterious, authentically visionary fusion. One feels it in such lines as:

> The unique flyer dawn's dove
> Arrowing down feathered with fire.

It informs the whole of a very beautiful poem called "The Poet" in *Poems in Wartime*.

I would like finally to quote a poem from the same volume which is, I think, completely successful and also very characteristic.

> It would be strange
> If at a crucial question, in wild beast dens
> Or cellars sweating with pain the stammerers
> Should find their confidence.
>
> It would be strange
> If the haphazard starling learned a neat
> Construction from the goldcrest and the blackcap's
> Seamless song in a night.
>
> It would be strange
> If from the consternation of the ant-hill
> Arose some order angelic, ranked for loving,
> Equal to good or ill.
>
> It would be more than strange
> If the devil we raised to avenge our envy, grief,
> Weakness, should take our hand like a prince and raise us
> And say, "I forgive."

ROSAMOND LEHMANN

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge. By JOHN STEEGMAN. *Batsford.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It is difficult to meditate on one's dear old university without falling either into snobbery or priggishness. I am a prig, and Mr. Steegman sometimes disconcerts me. For instance, when he says:

> The poor man from the elementary school really does not get very much out of Cambridge. He is not likely to make friends, and will almost certainly remain a fish out of water. He would be much wiser to go to one of the newer universities where he will feel less discontented with his lot. Discouraging though it may be for the social reformer, the man from the elementary school is unquestionably excluded from everything that makes Cambridge worth while.

Oh dear. As we push off in our punt, Mr. Steegman doing all the work and doing it with efficiency and grace, as we glide under Clare Bridge and through the Gate of Honour and down the Combination Room of John's, this little quotation worries me, like a pea under the cushions, and I ask myself what is wrong with it, or if nothing, what is wrong with me. The prig tries to get down to brass tacks in fact. What am I prepared to bequeath the place which I have loved for forty years, and where I have made my best friends? Do I really want the whole of its architecture to be remodelled into bed-sitting-rooms? Do I want its courts to be asphalted, and its lavatories to plunge and roar with municipal self-righteousness? Lavatories were few and far once. They belonged to the Silent Service, and were called Fourths because one of them was rumoured to lurk in the fourth court of Trinity. Ivy peeped. To go to one was an expedition only rivalled by the taking of a bath. Those hardships are vanishing. Hardship is vanishing, but so is style, and the two are more closely connected than the present generation supposes. The food that arrived on heads from the kitchens—lukewarm but from the kitchens—will soon arrive no more.

The punt drifts on, floating away from the cafeteria and cash register down the broadening stream. Here is the Pitt Press, charming, the freshman's first chapel. If we rise up a certain staircase in Caius, we can see the far-away towers of the Pitt Press through the whole breadth of the Senate House, shimmering and bending behind two thicknesses of glass. This is my private discovery. I announce it half asleep. And now the Campanile of the New University Library is mercifully concealed behind the Chestnuts of Jesus, and now we bob in the Market Piazza, where a fine new building, the Guildhall, has arisen in the nick of time. How happy am I that Mr. Steegman should praise the new Guildhall! The centre of the town will never go smartiboots now, and never become a civic centre. What a lot my guide knows! How deftly he steers! I drowse. A cushion falls into the Pem. And then again that disquieting pea.

This time the pea is feminine in gender.

> While the various parliamentary reforms can be defended as well as attacked, it is unusual to find anyone defending Girton and Newnham. . . . Cambridge owes a great deal to the munificence of such women as the Lady Clare, the Countess of Pembroke, Queen Margaret, the Lady Margaret, and the Countess of Sussex. But these pious foundresses founded their colleges for men and the argument is pointless. . . . The most serious indictment of the women students, apart from the fearsomeness of the women which these students almost always become unless they marry quickly,

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is the complete pointlessness of their being there.

So women, like elementary schoolmen, must be banned from our precinct, because they cannot enter properly into its social life. Does not the rest of the educational world lie open hood upon hood, gown upon skirt, mortar-board upon corduroy until the appointments-board creaks? O spare Cambridge! Is not the city a little one? Is she not unparalleled? Oxford, her swollen sister, is so distended by endowments as to be unrecognisable, and her old Gothic ornaments hang around her neck like a broken locket which she may at any moment swop. Cambridge still keeps her antique shape. No idealistic millionaire has yet raped her. The dons at her High Tables still rise into civilised conversation out of tired grunts. O leave her where she is and as she is, leave her to her peculiar destiny. She, Edinburgh and Bath are the only towns in Great Britain to retain any style, and she is unique, because to style she adds intellect and the power to mould a certain type of male. So keep off, you women, elementary and otherwise; you shall gain nothing from the Cam, not even a degree—that was the little trick it played you, ha ha! Horny-handed miners, meagre-faced technicians, high-collared clerks—go where you will feel less discontented, and where your fellow students will not decline to be your friends. Indians, be so good as to remain at Patna. Americans, have you not Carolina for your portion?

> In North Carolina the poets are fewer,
> We never were much at literature.

The phantoms fly as I sing. So varied, but all so unsuitable, they fly and educate themselves where and how they will and our punt drifts on, and Mr. Steegman and myself are soon engaged in a passionate dispute on the subject of the Chimney at Jesus. What! He would destroy the Chimney? What! He calls it a "depressing flagged path between high walls"? I cannot contain my rage, and utter a series of little Cambridge shrieks. For the Chimney, to me, is part of a delicate dramatic effect; at the end of its calculated dullness rises Alcock's rich Gate Tower, promising a different world—a promise faithfully fulfilled. I like, too, to think that Coleridge stole down it when he ran away to enlist in the Dragoons, and that Malthus paced up it as he planned how to decrease the human race and, incidentally, our troubles. I do not know its date—perhaps it did not exist in their day. All the same, hands off!

This is my major architectural quarrel with Mr. Steegman so it may be gathered how fully, in this department, I accept him. He might perhaps have mentioned the court of Emmanuel which lies across Emmanuel Street—I always like it, although it did destroy a group of picturesque cottages. And he might have mentioned—nobody does—the carving on the wooden west door of the chapel of Kings. Still, unlike the Chimney, these are no matters for a blood feud. On we drift, and as each noted building appears and reappears I am delighted by the comments of a learned and courageous mind. The work of the young Wren, of Gibbs, Wilkins and Cockerell, is focused with that of the anonymous medieval builders, until we see our Alma Mater advancing physically down the centuries, not always logically or gracefully, but to the measure that fascinated her sons,

> So that if at night, far out at sea, over the tumbling waves, one saw a haze on the waters, a city illuminated, a whiteness even in the sky, such as that now over the Hall of Trinity, where they're still dining, or washing up plates,—that would be the light burning there—the light of Cambridge.

How splendidly these words express our faith! How unlucky that they should have been written by a woman.

But at this point the publishers of the book, exasperated by so much literary flummery, may well enquire whether I recommend it or not, and whether I am going to tell prospective purchasers what sort of book it is. I do recommend it. It is a guide to Cambridge, in the fuller sense of the word Guide. Three parts. Cambridge as it was—historical; as it is—architectural; and modern Cambridge—mainly social, with surmises on what is to come. There are 130 good illustrations, some of them taken from old prints and engravings, the rest from modern photographs, also coloured plates, and endpapers. It is excellent money's worth.

> The Fellows went into Chapel on Monday before noon; after prayers and sacrament they began to vote. Thus they continued, scrutinising and walking about, eating and sleeping, some of them smoaking . . . at two in the morning there never was a more diverting or more curious spectacle. Some wrapped in blankets, erect in their stalls like mummies; others asleep on cushions, like so many Gothic tombs. Here a red cap over a wig, there a face lost in a rug. One blowing a chafing-dish with a surplice sleeve, another warming a little negus.

This is from the historical section. We have backed into the eighteenth century, and are assisting at the election of a Provost of King's. The eighteenth century is an appropriate landing-stage, our punt moors, and I get out on the steps of the Whig-Conservative Club. Prig's feelings are mixed. He has enjoyed his conducted tour, and found himself more of a snob than he intended. The selective Cambridge he loved cannot possibly survive, except as a museum piece. But the Cambridge-open-to-all, the in-accordance-with-national-needs-Cambridge will only be a technical finishing school, an educational crammery, a degree-monger, not a University at all. I dislike Mr. Steegman's hopes, but I share his fears, and in this dilemma I proffer a third solution—that of razing the whole sacred area to the ground. The dons and other portable valuables could first be transplanted to a safer spot, and Hitler would do the rest free of charge. She would survive as a memory then. And a memory can do more than either a mummy or a travesty towards civilising the world.

But if it came to a vote, I am against my Guide. I know so many elementary schoolmen who ought to have gone up twenty or thirty years ago, and who would have given as well as gained. And I know so many women who have retained their learning in spite of marriage, and their charm in spite of spinsterhood. He will say that these are exceptions, and will also point out that he holds no brief for rank or wealth. This is true, but his conception of Cambridge lacks generosity, he is always scrutinising the entrance lists, he will risk nothing which is not familiar to him socially; and if generosity is excluded the idea of a University becomes meaningless.

> I have been drawn to think rather of the tens who have failed than of the units who have succeeded, and of the ore that lies buried in our social strata rather than of the bright coins that circulate from hand to hand. If a field of coal or of some other material lies unworked and unused, yet it is always there. It may be kept for some future age when its wealth will be more needed, and posterity will bless the prescience and parsimony of their ancestors who refrained from using it. But the human mind is born and lives and perishes. If it is unenlightened, it passes away into its native darkness.

This is generosity, this is the warmth without which all education is senseless, and it is not to be laughed away by dubbing it Social Reform.

(Writing as I am on an academic theme, I had better give authority for my quotations throughout. The first two are from Mr. Steegman, the third was imported from America by G. L. Dickinson, the fourth is from Virginia Woolf, the fifth is quoted by Mr. Steegman from Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, and the final one is from Oscar Browning.)

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A Prophet at Home, the third volume of a trilogy which began with *Insanity Fair*, is a descriptive analysis of the state of England from the spring of 1939 down to the beginning of this year. The "Prophet" of his title must be read in the Old Testament sense; sharpened by the smell of disaster, his appetite for the disagreeable is keen. In the months before the war England looked to him "more like a mangy mongrel bestirring itself sleepily to go and die by the roadside than a British Lion preparing to turn at bay and round on its tormentors." And with his analysis of the cause of this degeneration, he introduces his first subject. The minds of the majority of the young men and women of the country were being "moulded by anonymous men far away who were of *alien* blood and *alien* thought" (my italics). By this, Mr. Reed seems to mean the American influence on English life wherever he finds it: dancing, cocktails, the cinema, mass production—all *alien*, all therefore vicious. One can imagine the angry pamphlets Mr. Reed would have written, if he had been an Elizabethan, denouncing alien innovations from the Continent. Yet if our tradition is not sturdy enough to enrich itself with American vitality for fear of being swamped, it cannot be of much account; and when Mr. Reed goes so far as to talk of our "alien-inspired radio" one begins to doubt his sense of humour (a quality lack of which he denounces in his fellow countrymen). Our alien-inspired radio! with its genteel announcers, its tea-time quintettes, its "*coseries*" from Lord Elton and its funereal revivals of Edwardian musical comedy.

But then, the word "alien" has for Mr. Reed a further significance. For he is what we used in our unscientific and muddle-headed way to call an anti-semite. Mr. Reed explains that this ascription is slipshod. He is not even anti-Jewish: his position he defines as being "against anti-Gentilism." It is, he assures us, an important distinction, although it seems to me, unregenerate as I am, to amount to much the same thing. For our criminal stupidity in offering asylum to the 150,000 refugees from Nazi persecution provides him with an opportunity for assuming his most Cassandra-like tone:

> A bad day's work has been done in this last year or so. I came back from abroad in 1939, after many years, fearing this only less than the war I knew was coming. I saw the things the same influx led to in other countries. If I am not a Boetian (*sic*), they will come in England: the lowering of taste and talent, the swamping of the last native standards and customs and traditions, the introduction of a meretricious and alien way of life, the squeezing out of youth and enthusiasm.

Well, well, we can only hope that Mr. Reed *is* a "Boetian"—we had better hire a racial theorist to examine the antecedents of his paternal grandmother's sisters.

From Anti-anti-Gentilism we make a transition to the second subject—class. More than any other one factor, Mr. Reed finds the class division which is popularly represented by the phrase The Old School Tie to be responsible for our present discontents. "The Old School Tie has the Somme, Passchendaele and Dunkirk as its battle honours, or dishonours," Mr. Reed writes. The addition of the last two words is characteristic. True, we have Mr. Churchill's reminder that wars are not won by retreats and evacuations, but if the Old School Tie was largely responsible for Dunkirk (which is doubtful) it would seem to have very much more to be said for it than Mr. Reed allows. Such criticism may appear captious; but in reading *A Prophet at Home* I found myself constantly picking holes in arguments with the general tenor of which I wholeheartedly agree. Of course, the rigid class system of England stifles initiative, wastes talent and degrades the dignity of common life. And, of course, all this has got to be changed. But Mr. Reed has the most irritating way of presenting his case. His manner comes out worst in a sentimental interlude during the bombing of London where whimsy and jocosity are nicely balanced. But all through he uses, to beguile his readers, all the basest devices of base style, down even to the depths of the facetious oath ("Fie, pfie and fi donc!" or "vomiting volcanoes!") When Mr. Reed abuses his countrymen for their surrender to the alien influences of the film, he might recollect that his own writing panders to their vitiated tastes with as many tricks as any Hollywood director can produce.

Others may object less to this literary bedizenment; for them Mr. Reed's book may be stimulating. He has been right in the past; and it is worth while recalling the lethargy and mental sloth of the last decade, if it brings home the lesson that these causes produced the effects which we are now enduring. It was not for want of telling that the English apathetically allowed its dithering leaders "whose only profession was office" in Mr. Reed's phrase, to lead them from disaster to disaster. What people like him foretold has now happened, and it is worth rubbing it in on the assumption that people learn from experience if the experience is bitter enough. The future, by some miracle, is still ours; from Dunkirk onwards Mr. Reed found he was after all not writing The Decline and Fall of the British Empire. But Cassandra, whatever else, was never complacent. Too many of those ditherers are still in office; the power of the Old School Tie is by no means broken; and the Sunshine Tories are busy relegating the future to that never-never time of unredeemed promises, After the Victory. If this book does something towards persuading a still only half-awakened public that winning the peace and winning the war are part of the same process, it will have been worth writing.

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Some novels could be worse but couldn't possibly be better, and some couldn't be worse. There is no point in scolding; the writing, sensational, shoddy or sentimental, is just about adequate to the matter. One might as well complain of the inelegant bottles in which Empire wine is sold. The bottles are very suitable and so is the language: we all know what we are absorbing and there is no deception.

But occasionally there is a novel that could be better and *Change the Name* is one of them. It could be very good indeed. Written in a number of scenes where the emotional content is high and the expression of it laconic, it has a surface restraint that is impressive and a form that is admirably economical. It also has a good subject, the unswerving career of a pathologically selfish woman. Celia Henzell is the child of a neurasthenic mother, perpetually mourning for a son, who died at thirteen, and of a father interested only in his work as a solicitor and provincial Town Clerk; she is not encouraged even to feel that disinterested friendliness common amongst self-absorbed people. Thwarted of a career at Oxford she turns her brain to self-advancement in another direction and carries out a schoolgirl threat to marry the first man who asked her. Her first husband is killed after eighteen months and the rest of her life is spent in ridding herself of her unwanted daughter, and getting herself established, via two more husbands and a few novels, in the literary world. At once apathetic and calculating, she does not look for steps to take, nor does she plan ahead, but waits until things come to her, and then if she can turn them to

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her advantage she does so, no matter what the cost to other people. Celia's character is consistent and the results of her singlemindness convincing. But the writing wavers from the felicitous to the shoddy.

> Celia ate quickly to catch up with her father who had very nearly finished his first course. The negligent way she put good food into her mouth was displeasing to him, but he disguised his annoyance, sitting stiff and controlled until her plate was empty. Then he rang the bell for the apple-pie which was cut and eaten in silence.

The unsympathetic atmosphere of Celia's home is admirably expressed in these unemphatic words. But what about this?

> Desborough House gradually became a sort of nightmare to him. It was a white elephant, a millstone about his neck, a horrible deadweight of loss which would cripple him to the end of his days. In the evening when he was unlikely to meet any of his acquaintances, he would go to look at the house, letting himself in furtively through the padlocked gates like a criminal drawn irresistibly to the scene of his crime.

It is the kind of thing that is comforting in a collected edition of Sherlock Holmes, it shows you haven't opened the wrong book, but it won't do here. And Miss Kavan descends even lower; "sometimes she had a fatalistic idea that the house was waiting for her; that she would be drawn back there against her will." She scatters "strange," "curious," "indefinable" and "enigmatic" everywhere; she has such a clear vision of her heroine as a girl with bright hair and a "pale, unresponsive face," that she never mentions her without so describing her and doesn't trust her readers to remember. I believe this book suffers a good deal simply from lack of experience, but if it had been re-written it would have stood a chance of being first-class instead of the best of a bad lot.

Troubled Waters is readable—which is more than one expects from a book translated from the French about cod-fishing in Icelandic waters—but only just. It is one of those books in which it is very hard to find your place, because winches, beams, dogs, planks, drags, nets and the white bellies of innumerable fish spread themselves in a welter of technicalities over ten pages in every other chapter. It is probably very accurate and enthralling to those that know about it, like village life in Nairobi. The point of the story, that the Captain's son, Jean Villeneuve has insisted on going on the trip with his father because he cannot bear to see his mother unfaithful at home is so obvious from the beginning that it seems a pity to try to keep it a surprise for the reader as well as for the Captain at the end. The boy's unutterable boredom on a ship where he has no essential job is well suggested and so is the character of M. Villeneuve. The cold waters and the Icelandic coast provide opportunity for bright descriptions.

And here is another of those comforting library books: *Tadpole Hall*. It is about the country, and about nice people dealing with problems that we can all appreciate; evacuees and refugees at the outbreak and during the early part of the war. The Colonel is a dear, generous old thing, his sister and housekeeper bossy and not very well-meaning, his house Georgian, his daughters modern but good (the youngest one, with her boyish charm is very nearly the son he would so much have liked), his grandchildren sweet, his Austrian refugee cook Aryan, imperturbable, noble and gay. The Austrian's husband is an unhappy Jew. A touchingly pointless topical tale, one of the many, no doubt, that we are about to enjoy.

Mr. Littlejohn is just another New World fantasy. You may be able to stand this dyspeptic business man, who has run away from the business world at fifty odd to solve the enigma of life, and if you can, you can—and the nine hundred and ninety-nine hamburgers that he consumes in road houses *en route*. Mr. Littlejohn is a very simple-minded philosopher:

> Mr. Littlejohn reflected: juice is important—heat, light, and power are necessary things. Hamburger is important too. It symbolises food. Juice and hamburger—our physical requirements. And suppose they were miraculously and abundantly provided for everybody in the world—would that be enough? No. He shook his head. There would still be *life* and *death*, and no answer to the questions that they raise. . . .

There are one or two funny incidents in this novel, but they aren't really worth the journey through the hideous neon-lighted landscape inhabited by toughs, fools and sentimentalists. It should make a profitable film.

The Little Less is not a nice book. Miss du Maurier seems to have been so surprised to discover that marrying and having children is not the whole of love, that she manages to make a fuss about it for three hundred and nineteen pages. Her men, who only want ONE THING and her women who are broken creatures because of what men have done to them, her prudish boy and girl friendships and her stickily indelicate female attachments present such a sordid picture of life that I am really surprised that she should have dedicated the book "To Mummie." MYFANWY PIPER.

TWO VIEWS

Through China's Wall. By GRAHAM PECK. *Collins.* 12s. 6d.

Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom. By CARL CROW. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10s. 6d.

There is a curious relationship between these two books—the one thinly, rather conventionally cultured, the other hard-hitting, individualist and unillusioned. Mr. Peck's notion of how Chinese peasants talk is a direct product of the "said Confucius" vogue of humour created in America by Mr. Crow's popular life of Confucius. "Shoes for the same foot must be worn by different persons," and "Can the swallows know the wild goose's intention?" Mr. Peck's Chinese peasants are made to say. Mr. Peck is an artist, and one learns at art-schools that it pays better to look at one's neighbour's drawing-board than at the model. An alternative theory, of course, is that he really heard peasants indulging in these Sino-American wisecracks; but this seems to be ruled out by his own confession that he left Peking knowing very little Chinese. As regards Mongol he seems to remain equally true to convention: "How are the herds?" "The herds are well." "How is it at the zurts?" "It is well at the zurts," and so forth. This dialogue may of course be perfectly authentic; but here again the question arises, how did Mr. Peck, who never suggests that he learnt to speak Mongol, know what his Mongolians were saying?

In Mr. Crow's book, as opposed to Mr. Peck's, the sardonic takes the place of the picturesque. He was struck when he first came to Shanghai by the fact that native shops closed on Sunday, and thought it was due to the prevalence of Christianity. And so it was; but the Christianity in question was that, not of the Chinese shopkeepers, but of the British and American sailors who not being allowed to work on Sunday came on shore and looted such shops as had not taken the precaution of closing down. The following, again, is in Mr. Crow's grimly genial vein:

> From the time that Americans first began coming to China they had led in crime as they have led in mission work. The category of crimes was very limited. Unless my memory is at fault the Americans who went from Shanghai to some prison in America during the past twenty-five years were all convicted of mixing up other people's money with their own. The list is a rather impressive one. It included many of my personal friends: a world-famous aviator, two bankers, the manager of a big oil-company, the district attorney and the clerk of the United States Court for China. One of them was such a pillar of the Church that the missionaries did most of their banking with him.

Admirable is Mr. Crow's picture of the Shanghai millionaire Silas Hardoon:

> The desk at which he sat was one that could not be duplicated at any furniture store in America, for no store would stock one so cheap. It had been made of pine by a Chinese carpenter—and not a very good carpenter at that. There was no rug on the unpainted floor, no curtains at the windows. There was no heat in his office, and on cold days he would sit there bundled in his overcoat. . . . Why he tolerated a spendthrift like me I could never understand, unless it was because my companionship threw his virtues into such high relief.

Speaking of the hatred of foreigners in China he says "It was always surprising to me that more

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of them were not maltreated. In fact it seemed to me that as a class we suffered very much less animosity than we deserved." That is Mr. Crow's verdict upon the Shanghailanders, with whom he lived for thirty years. His book ends with the evacuation of Shanghai in 1937. Mr. Peck's narrative ends tragically with the fall of Peking in the same year. "The era of the foreign devil is ended."

ARTHUR WALEY

THE GOOD JOURNALIST

A Jacobean Journal, 1603–6. By G. B. HARRISON. *Routledge.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Harrison's learned, inquisitive, and remarkably well-informed Elizabethan diarist continues his felicitous way into the reign of James I. His interests are as versatile as ever; he turns his bland, intelligent eye and urbane, anecdotal pen on to court events, theology, literature and drama, parliament, the laws, entertainments, crime, executions, plots, sorcerers, witches, affectations of speech, voyages and explorations, pageants, clothes (for which he has a truly milliner's eye), lion-baiting, shocking doings abroad, everything. Dr. Harrison puts into his mouth judiciously chosen extracts from most of the contemporary documents—journals, letters, state papers, mariners' yarns, the Stationers' Register (whose title is misprinted, by the way, in a list of sources, where the stationers become statesmen.) Dr. Harrison complains that war has hampered his researches, but no ordinary reader need grumble, for he has given his diarist a rich enough field to ramble over. There seems only one complaint that can legitimately be made by readers: the original and ingenious method of compilation should surely be explained in each fresh volume. Dr. Harrison contents himself with saying that it has been explained before and need not here be repeated. So the reader coming new to the *Jacobean Journal* and unfamiliar with its predecessors has no means of knowing that some of these records are exact verbal quotations from the sources appended to them in the notes, others are paraphrases, selections or summaries, others Dr. Harrison's own comments, which are such admirable period pastiches as to be usually undiscernable to the naked eye. Further, when two or three sources are given for the same passage, there are no means provided for attributing the several parts. To sift out all this ingenious fadging one would need at hand all the books referred to, and many of them are books one doesn't have at hand at all, such as State Papers; one would need several weeks in one of the major libraries. The young or unwary student may be tripped into taking Dr. Harrison's own words for those of the Stationers' Register, or into quoting a condensed account of some voyage or religious conference as the precise words of Purchas or Fuller. Can it be right thus to ensnare the innocent and confuse the less innocent?

But perhaps it is. Perhaps it is best to read this extremely readable book through without troubling ourselves about the apportioning of sources or the separating of authors. Fadged it is, but so very well fadged that no joints are apparent, and so well chosen as to give a rich, many-sided picture of an age. The hypothetical diarist turns his lively attention all ways; a true news-hound, he is so quick off the mark as to quote stories of the adventures of returned voyagers before they were printed, and give the gist of books on the very day of publication. He would edit a classy Sunday paper rather well, with his nice mixture of political gossip, literary and dramatic criticism, and prophetic omniscience; he would not be so bad, either, on a less classy Sunday paper, for he has a nose for crime (and pretty bloody crime too), executions (still bloodier), scandals, royalties and all their doings, lion cubs (which, when born in the Tower, the pet-doting king had a habit of taking from their dams to be brought up by hand, so they always died), great whales in the Thames, horrible atrocities on the Continent, and the beastly orgies that attended the visits of foreign royalties. He is something of a theologian, too; he does full justice to the Millenary Petition, and the Hampton Court Conference where his royal master so distinguished himself in argument with the Puritans. His defect, if he has one, is that, owing to the nature of the sources at his command and the lack of a different kind of source, he necessarily tends to view events from the top down. The ejection of the three hundred ministers, for instance, he relates thus:

> Our puritans now go down on all sides and though the new Bishop of London proceed but slowly, yet at last he hath deprived, silenced or suspended all that continue disobedient, in which course he hath won himself great commendation . . . etc.

Thus Sir Ralph Winwood. But one would like also the view of the village goodman and his wife on the parson thrown out and the new parson put in; the "things most talked of" should be talked of both by high and low, but unfortunately, though doubtless the low talked, as the low always have, it was the high who committed their talk to paper and made it accessible to posterity. Again, there is plenty said of the plays and masques (and how enchanting the last were!) that court and gentry saw, but not so much about the new popular show of Punch and Judy and its like. This lack of balance is inevitable and no one's fault but that of the ignorant people who could not and did not write, but at times the effect is slightly top-heavy. All written history is top-heavy, however; even most unwritten history; this, much less so than most, does brilliantly show kaleidoscopic views of a period, turning up now a glimpse of the solemn fudge of the Puritans, now of the equally solemn and more dangerous fudge of the regiolaters, now of the lavish extravagance of a spendthrift court, now of the shocking misfortunes of the poor, or those more shocking still of conspirators (these were vintage years for conspiracies), now of the solidifying of the Anglican Church, the attempts at liquidation of the Roman one, the rapid growth of those rebels against both, the Puritans. We read on one page of hawking and hunting, on another of the saucy Cambridge Puritan, Bywater, who

> grew more precise every day, maintaining to his Lordship's face that hounds and hawks were not ordained by God for man's recreation, but for adorning the earth and heavens. Thereafter Lord Sheffield dismissed him from his service.

So, among pageants, plays, murders, parliamentary proceedings, miracles, sports, nautical expeditions, considerations about the Union with Scotland, and the insupportable insolencies of foreigners, 1606 runs out.

"I have seldom seen," wrote Joseph Hall, quoted here by our diarist, "much ostentation and much learning met together." Yet ostentation and learning would not be a bad description of much of the rich and curious medley of our Jacobean age.

ROSE MACAULAY

A TYRANT OF TASTE

Diaghilev. By SERGE LIFAR. *Putnam.* 21*s.*

Books about Diaghilev are always good, because anything about him can be read in two ways. There is the life of the genius, a genius who never himself created a single work of art yet whose genius was admitted by everyone; and there is the showman, the caricature of the international homosexual aristocratic millionaire, the walking Charlus, with his quarrels and grievances, his "scenes" and his superstition. The tragedy of genius and the comedy of manners co-exist in everything that touches him.

Lifar's book is therefore appropriately divided into two halves. The first half is a life of him up to his death—solid, rather dull, obviously the result of some painstaking collaboration (probably Kubitovitch or some old friend)—the second an account of his friendship with Lifar, in what is to all intents Lifar's autobiography. Lifar is a very good dancer and beautiful as a rare monkey, but he is not a genius, nor does he possess the self-knowledge of the true autobiographer. He is vain, pompous, humourless, spoilt and exhibitionistic; consequently this second part is a fascinating, comic and appalling volume, like Charlus's life written by Morel. Among tender tributes to Diaghilev's awe-inspiring genius and friendship appear shafts of malice and contortions of envy. Nijinsky, Massine, Dolin and Marcievitch are especially sore subjects. For macabre comedy I have read nothing to equal the death scenes, in which Lifar, who had been cut out by Marcievitch, takes, amid scenes of genuine grief, his unconscious revenge. A main difficulty, and a very real one, was how to steal the limelight at Diaghilev's funeral, where strategically one would have thought the corpse occupied an almost impregnable position. Here, in his own words, is how his Ego solved it.

At the church.

But when we came to the church, now full of people, though I was supported on either side by Misia and Coco, I found it utterly impossible to enter the church, for at every moment some unknown force seemed intent to prevent me. It was as though a wall had risen in front of the church which I was utterly unable to pierce. With every ounce of my will I strove to master the spell cast over me—but unsuccessfully. I was terrified: "What could it be—was I about to go mad?" And this thought paralysed me still more completely. After a number of efforts, however, I finally succeeded in making a rush that forced me through the portals, as though I were crashing through something hard and indestructible which had raised itself like a barrier: then racing down the whole length of the church, I collapsed with a terrible scream by the altar, behind the iconostasis, as though I had gone completely out of my mind. . . .

I hated the idea of approaching the grave and was terrified of seeing the coffin lowered into it. . . . Then picking up a small trowel, the priest cast a handful of earth on the coffin. How fearful was the sound it made! And I too took some earth, meaning to follow his example. But suddenly it was impossible to hold myself back. I was swept away by some unknown force which surged irresistibly up in me, which swept away all restraint, and I hurled myself into the grave . . . whereupon a dozen hands seized me, and with immense difficulty managed to drag me back, for my maniac delirium had endued me with herculean strength. Then I was led from the cemetery.

Quiet, solemn quiet, reigns on the Island of St. Michele where the mortal remains of Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev rest for ever—

Venise inspiratrice éternelle de nos apaisements.

When the cigar smoke and incense have subsided, the gardenias withered, the quarrels been forgotten, the first night audience, choice as his first editions, been dispersed, and the *wagon-lit* shunted home, what remains of Diaghilev? Was he more than an Impresario or a caricature of the Artist to whom everything was permitted for Art's sake? I think he was. He was a genius, a genius at collaboration, a genius at bringing out the genius in others, a genius at watering the most fruitful art forms of his time. His tyranny, like Toscanini's, came from a love of art even stronger than his pupils', and an iron resolve to bring out the best in them. Although the only subject connected with the ballet in which he was supreme was lighting, in all the great ballets of his time the collusion of painters and composers came to nothing without his aid. From its Oriental remoteness, far away as the Royal Cambodian dancers from Paris and London, he took the Marünsky ballet and developed it, against every kind of bureau-

The Way to an Island

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cratic intransigence, and with no funds except what he could raise from his own self-confidence, into the most advanced cultural force in Europe, and accomplished this entirely on the strength of his faith and his personality.

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CYRIL CONNOLLY

GEORGE V

King George V. A Personal Memoir by JOHN GORE. *John Murray*. 18*s*.

King Emperor. The Life of His Majesty King George VI. By ERICA BEAL. *Collins*. 16*s*.

Mr. John Gore begins by acknowledging the great help given him by Queen Mary in the preparation of his book, which was written at her request and at King George VI's. Her Majesty provided much information, made many suggestions, and read both the manuscript and the proofs. Many readers will be prepared to find the book as lifeless and uncritical as other authorised biographies of royal personages, especially as it is a personal memoir which deliberately avoids political and constitutional issues. In fact the tone of the book turns out to be remarkably healthy; though respectful and sympathetic, the author does not fall into the adulation and sentimentality commonly excited by Royalty. He avoids repeating the "jokes and quaint sayings" which in Princes are often mistaken for wit, and which, as he says, "when repeated in cold blood, do no service to their begetters." Though he may attenuate the King's failings, he does not conceal them; nor does he attribute to him qualities that he did not possess. That a royal command should have resulted in so un-László-like a portrait can be taken as pleasing evidence of the spirit now prevailing in Court circles.

The character of King George V was simple, and unlikely to puzzle or stimulate future historians. He lacked his father's tact and gusto no less than his grandmother's vigour and his eldest son's quickness of mind. Here is Mr. Gore's summary of the King as he appeared to his friends:

> He gained their love by no exercise of social gifts, by no personal magnetism, by no intellectual powers. He was neither a wit nor a brilliant *raconteur*, neither well read nor well educated, and he made no great contribution to enlightened social converse. He lacked intellectual curiosity, and only late in life acquired some measure of artistic taste. But if he lacked ideas, he was none the less sentient and sympathetic, in some ways even sentimental. . . . What won and held their admiration was, first and last, his straightness and his loyalty and his thoughtfulness. In him was no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He tolerated no compromise between what was white and what was black, what was right, and what might be justified.

Capriciousness is the occupational disease of Princes, and thus to have escaped it proves the King's uncommon moral soundness. His bringing-up reinforced his natural virtues, but did nothing to supply his deficiencies. His father, determined that the mistakes made in his own education should not be repeated, fell into the opposite excess. At the age of 12 the little Prince was sent to the naval training ship *Britannia*, in which he was submitted to the usual rough-and-tumble of boarding-school life. After two years of this he was posted as a cadet to H.M.S. *Bacchante*, in which he cruised for three years. Up to the age of 27 he led the exacting but narrow life of a naval officer, knowing nothing of politics or culture; then his elder brother died, and he found himself in direct succession to the throne. He married a princess who was well educated, but his family discouraged her intellectual curiosity and her desire for responsibility. She was not allowed even to arrange her house and garden without constant reference to her husband's parents. There was a tour to India, another to the Dominions, but King Edward otherwise allowed the young couple no opportunity of gaining the experience that would prepare them for the Throne. Sir Arthur Bigge, afterwards Lord Stamfordham, was, however, appointed Private Secretary to the Prince, and the part played by this brave and most sagacious man can hardly be exaggerated. When George V became King, Mr. Gore says:

> He was well aware that his education as a sailor had ill fitted him for many of his new responsibilities. It had been only during his father's reign, nine swiftly moving years, that under the influence of Sir Arthur Bigge he had done something to repair the gaps in his knowledge of English and Constitutional History and to attain the normal educational standard of the average public-schoolboy at the leaving age. These gaps had not yet been repaired, that standard not reached, when he came to the Throne. They had been busy years, much interrupted by official duties overseas. He was still methodically plodding on with his education when his reign was half over.

Constitutional historians, moreover, are likely to discover that Lord Stamfordham, like the Private Secretary in the previous reign, skilfully reduced the part played by the Monarch in public business to meet the changing conception of the royal function. How radical, in spite of its gradualness, the alteration was could be shown by comparing the constant interferences of Queen Victoria with the wise limitations accepted by George V. But this is outside the scope of Mr. Gore's book. We may note as creditable to both parties equally a letter the Prince of Wales, as he then was, wrote to Sir Arthur in 1902: "I feel that I can always rely on you to tell the truth however disagreeable and that you are entirely in my confidence. To a person in my position it is of enormous help to me." Eleven years later, as King, he wrote almost in the same words—adding: "I don't know what I should have done without your kind help and advice."

Mr. Gore points out the backwardness of George V as a boy in spelling, punctuation and calligraphy; indeed, his spelling never became good, and his handwriting was always that of a

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child. It might be argued that, like many of his compatriots, he never entirely grew up: he retained a boyish enthusiasm not only for shooting and yachting but for stamp-collecting. Though he liked music, he seems never to have progressed beyond a taste for Sullivan and Puccini; his favourite painters were Frith and Landseer; and the books he read, of which an enlightening list is given by Mr. Gore, consisted chiefly of works about his relations or about sport, and adventure stories, like John Buchan's. (Almost the only work of pure literature on the list is *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.) He had a boy's suspicion of the foreigner and the highbrow—a word that had once puzzled him because he believed that it was spelt "eyebrow"; he had a boy's intense conservatism. Politically he seems to have preserved admirable impartiality, treating the Labour Ministers most correctly. He urged moderation upon Mr. Lloyd George's Government in their negotiation of the Irish Treaty; and Mr. Gore hints that his part in the formation of the National Government was slighter than is commonly believed. But in social life his conservatism was bigoted; he displayed a violent dislike of motor-bicycles, short skirts, women who painted their nails or rode astride. As Mr. Gore puts it with polite meiosis: "He derived his impression of the world of youth outside and of changing fashions of thought from his sister, Princess Victoria, who was perhaps not highly qualified to give a full and impartial picture." Even his explosive rudeness, which one may suspect this book of minimising, seems to have had a schoolboy quality. But the coarse chaff that is tolerable in a fag must be particularly deplored in a Monarch, because his victims are not free to answer in the same style.

This brings us to the King's gravest failing—his treatment of his sons. He had enjoyed a happy childhood, adoring his mother and sister, though his affection for his father was qualified by a respect that approximated to fear. His marriage was ideally happy; but in spite of his undeviating devotion to his wife and his high opinion of her abilities he did not, Mr. Gore tells us, consult her as freely as he might about his problems and anxieties. (This confirms what I have heard from other sources: the widespread belief that Queen Mary exercised too firm an influence upon her husband is the reverse of the truth.) He was by nature neither tolerant nor imaginative, and his education served only to give him the manners of the quarter-deck. Mr. Gore tactfully suggests the results, as they affected his sons:

> While they remained children, his manner of chaffing them or interrogating them had added to the shyness and tied the tongues of those by nature the most diffident. . . . He once remarked sadly to a friend: "I am devoted to children and good with them. But they grow up, and you can only watch them going their own way and can do nothing to stop them. Nowadays young people don't seem to care what they do or what people think." His words give a hint of an almost fatalistic belief in a barrier between the generations. He more than once spoke with the same fatalism about the attitude of British sovereigns to their eldest sons in recent centuries.

He complained that when he had become heir to the Throne he had "known nobody"; nevertheless, we are told that he did not encourage his younger sons to know politicians, and "King George VI on accession found himself in much the same position in this respect as his father had been."

Mr. Balfour is reported to have said of King George V in 1909: "Except the German Emperor, the Prince of Wales is the only prince to whom I can talk as man to man. He is really clever." This last paradox one might think meant merely that he was clever enough to know his own limitations, and not to pretend to knowledge that he did not possess. He possessed genuine humility—his own popularity, as displayed at his Jubilee, amazed him; but, perhaps from an inferiority-complex, he was apt to "do all the talking," according to Mr. Gore, "voicing too frankly and recklessly his opinions on all subjects and personalities, as though he were impelled to show his Ministers that he knew something of everything and held concrete views on all the questions of the hour." But he was habitually wiser in his acts than in his words—in this respect, as in so many, showing himself the opposite of Charles II. He sized up a man, we are told, with uncommon speed, and "knew the crooks in politics without any coaching." But his strong and continued liking for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald suggests that his intuitions were not infallible.

The King was an excellent landlord and employer, never happier than when he was a country squire chatting with the tenants and gamekeepers on his Norfolk estate. But there is little indication that he took to heart or realised the shameful conditions in which a large proportion of his subjects had to live. On the other hand, during his reign the Court did little or nothing to encourage the arts; compared with her grandson, Queen Victoria might be described as an aesthete—or at least as an enlightened patron. But when every one of his failings has been considered, and when the history of his official activities has been made public, it may well be found that this not particularly gifted or distinguished man was by reason of his modesty, his good sense and his rigorous devotion to duty, the best English Monarch since Queen Elizabeth.

Miss Erica Beal's book is as different as could be from Mr. Gore's. It is unofficial, and shows almost every fault possible in a royal biography. According to the publishers, it includes "extracts from Official Documents relative to the South African War, to the Great War, and to the present war; documents which reveal many of the Nazi falsehoods." If it does indeed contain any important unpublished documents, I have failed to discover them. But Miss Beal does give us repeatedly a mass of information about Harrod's Stores, which she seems to find peculiarly interesting. She also diverges from her important subject to complain that as a voluntary worker in this war she was expected to pay her own laundry bills.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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The Way to an Island. By R. M. LOCKLEY. *Dent.* 7s. 6d.

My Life with Grey Owl. By ANAHAREO. *Davies.* 8s. 6d.

It Was Good While It Lasted. By HENRY LONGHURST. *Dent.* 15s.

It took Mr. Langston Hughes, introduced, not unnecessarily to me, as "the famous negro poet, novelist and playwright," a long time to discover that he could make a living out of writing. He made one, with difficulty, until he was nearly thirty, out of other things. First he was a teacher of English in Mexico, then a seaman, then a cook, waiter and doorman by turns in Paris night clubs, then a truck-gardener on Staten Island, then a clerk at the Association for the Study of Negro Life and Culture at Washington, then a bus boy, then a laundry sorter. While working at these jobs, he went on writing. His poetry, which for years he gave away gladly to anyone who would publish it, attracted attention and won him literary friends and patrons. After four years at Lincoln University, where he wrote his first novel,

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which won the Harmon Gold Award, he decided to make literature his profession. "Shortly poetry became bread, prose, shelter and raiment." That is all he says in his autobiography about his present career. He has other fish to fry.

"Folks! When you start with nothing, it's hard to rise to something." Particularly hard if you are an American negro. Even when you have risen to something you will be unable to get a cup of coffee on a cold day anywhere within sight of the Capitol at Washington. "Strangely undemocratic doings take place in the shadow of 'the world's greatest democracy,'" Mr. Hughes remarks in the chapter devoted to his experiences in Washington. One took place on the day of Mr. Roosevelt's inauguration as President for a third term. Was it with the consent of "Noodeal," as negroes call the President, that they were excluded from the gala concert given in his honour? Accustomed by his ghetto life in Washington to limitations of a negro's freedom, Mr. Hughes took quite seriously a question put to him in the South by a Fisk University student: "Don't you know the white folks down South don't allow negroes to wear smoked glasses?" Quickly Mr. Hughes snatched off the glasses he was wearing to protect his eyes from the glare of the sun. It was not until the student laughed that he realised it was only a joke. Yet there are notices put up in towns down South which are not only a joke. For example: "Nigger, don't let the sun go down on you here." That word "Nigger," Mr. Hughes tells us, was responsible for the violent attack on Carl Van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven* in the negro press:

> You see, the word sums up for us who are coloured all the bitter years of insult and struggle in America, the slave-beatings of yesterday, the lynchings of to-day, the Jim Crow cars, the movie shows for whites only, the restaurants where you may not eat, the jobs you may not have, the unions you cannot join . . . *Nigger!* Like the word Jew in Hitler's Germany.

What the proverb says about people who live in glass houses might usefully be pondered at the White House.

Not Without Laughter, the title of that first novel, says a mouthful about its writer's autobiography. There is a laugh on nearly every page. He sees his life as a comedy, despite its sufferings, disappointments and humiliations. The action of one of the multifarious scenes takes place in Harlem during the Negro Renaissance of the 'twenties. Those were the days when white people went crazy over negro music, negro dancing, negro everything, and flocked to Harlem to see what they imagined was "the real thing." As a matter of fact, it was bogus, got up by the negroes to please their white patrons. Many of them were not flattered by the Manhattan invasion. "They said: 'We can't go downtown and sit and stare at you in your clubs. You won't even let us into your clubs.' But they didn't say it out loud, for negroes are practically never rude to white people." An assertion confirmed by the politeness of all Mr. Hughes' references to his personal experience of colour prejudice. As a seaman he visited Africa. "My Africa! Motherland of the negro peoples!" There at least he would not find his colour a disadvantage. It was, however. The African negroes despised him because he was brown, not black. "It hurt me a lot." Yet he is proud that the blood of the Jacobean poet, Francis Quarles, runs in his veins. *Negro Spiritual.*

Mr. Croft-Cooke fell in love with a travelling circus at first sight. The circus has no home, but he had one, and after his first meeting with the enchantress, he returned to it and went on writing novels (an imposing list of them meets one's eye when one opens this book about his love-affair). Five and a half years passed before he yielded to his impulse to run away with the circus. The circus meant a good deal more to him than glittering riders, bored elephants, noisy clowns, wire walkers, trapeze artists. It meant the Rosaire family in their cosy, mahogany-lined living-wagons, people who "escaped all categories of class, of intellect, of background, of profession," people who "seemed to have created their own world as they had built up their vast tent." Mrs. Rosaire, "the Countess" in this world, had told him at their first meeting that she thought it a pity writers only studied a big show like Bertram Mills's. "You ought to come and travel with us for a time. You'll enjoy yourself, and learn a lot." *The Circus Has No Home* proves she was right there. And now we can enjoy ourselves and learn a lot from reading the book. It is not merely a narrative of Mr. Croft-Cooke's experiences "tenting" from 1937 to 1939. He induced the Count, the Countess, and other members of the Rosaire family to tell him their life-stories, and has reproduced them, exactly, I assume, from the colloquial and individual style of each, as they were told. They make his infatuation with the Rosaires quite comprehensible. I understand why, during the first weeks of the war, he felt it most on their account. Their lives had been based on the axiom that somehow or other, whatever the difficulties, the show must be given. Hitler had closed it. *Rondo.*

However much soldiers may have changed since Shakespeare wrote *As You Like It*, they are still "full of strange oaths." In Mr. Dixon's *Tinned Soldier*, a record of his experiences in the ranks of the Royal Tank Corps in peacetime (he enlisted in 1918 after the Armistice), there is a fine collection of expletives. It is not on that account I recommend the book. There are many better reasons for reading it. One is that it gives a faithful picture, crowded with intimate details, of the training of the British soldier. Another that it brings us into contact with T. E. Lawrence in the role of Private Shaw. "It was with mixed feelings that I watched the erstwhile king-maker and leader of armies marching up and down the barrack square, and learning, of all things, to salute 'by numbers.'" The drill instructor said: "You seem an educated sort of chap, Shaw. What made you join the Tank Corps?" "Overwork, Sergeant." *Marche Militaire.*

The photograph of Mr. Lockley at the tiller of a motor boat reproduced on the jacket of *The Way to an Island* told me much about him before I had opened the book. I believe in judging by appearances, in spite of the story that St. Thomas Aquinas was so stout that a piece had to be cut out of the refectory table to accommodate his stomach. Mr. Lockley, at any rate, looks what he is, a man of great determination who, having found out early in life what he wanted, was not to be hindered by anyone or anything from getting it. He wanted an island, a small lonely island, where he could live the life he knew fitted him best. "I was a strange boy, people said, going after birds, and looking at flowers, instead of playing cricket, staring like an idiot into the heart of a flower for minutes on end, straining to look at the tiny yellow migratory warblers feeding in the trees." Birds were the ruling passion of this born naturalist. What attracted him to Skokholm, a rocky island off the Pembrokeshire coast, was that it had a constantly changing population of birds. Shearwaters, puffins, guillemots, razorbills, buzzards, ravens, pipits, redwings, and many more, common and rare, sweet songsters, and harsh shriekers. Much as I like this book, for one reason because it is beautifully written, I would not recommend it to anyone who is not interested in birds. *Pastorale.*

To turn from Mr. Lockley to Anahareo (the Indian mate of Grey Owl) is to turn from birds to beavers, from lovely English to tough American. Anahareo got to know beavers intimately, keeping little ones as pets, during her travels with Grey Owl, at that time a trapper, along the waterways of Northern Ontario. They had an important share in his transformation into an ardent champion of the protection of wild animals. Anahareo describes her life in the wilds with this remarkable man with a wealth of detail, yet we get only a hazy impression of him. To make up for that we get a very clear impression of her. It is not a lovable personality, but it is a deeply interesting one. "I want you to see me as I was at the time I met this hero from the North. I was, I think, quite pretty, and I was a very ambitious young lady whose main desire was to be able to act tough." It was this desire which urged her to go off with Grey Owl, not caring, although she was educated at a Catholic school, that "it looks bad from the road for a girl to be going with

Paul Brunton Ph.D.

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a man, even into God's own country, without a chaperone." She gives rather frivolous reasons for an objection to marriage, which was not shared by Grey Owl. Her facetiousness nearly made me shut the book before I got to the beavers. *Capriccio.*

It Was Good While it Lasted. One has only to look at the frontispiece of the sixth book, showing Mr. Longhurst, spruce in a well-cut suit, flower in buttonhole, laughing, smoking, and drawing a cork (probably cocktail time), to be sure it was very good. Mr. Winston Churchill once wrote that he had the good fortune to be a person whose work and pleasure were one. Mr. Longhurst has it, too. His work as a golf correspondent, well-paid from the start, took him to some of the loveliest parts of Great Britain and Ireland, to the Continent, and to America. His account of his travels is good fun. Some of his character-sketches are brilliant, particularly those of Lord Castlerosse, Henry Cotton and Bernard Darwin. If the good times do not come again after the war, Mr. Longhurst intends to take a leaf out of Sydney Smith's book. "If it be my lot to crawl, I will crawl contentedly; if to fly, I will fly with alacrity; but as long as I can possibly avoid it, I will never be unhappy." *Gigue.*

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

Horizon. March, 1941. 1*s.*

Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. J. B. Priestley launch with a few well-chosen words *Horizon's* intended series upon post-war reconstruction. Mr. T. S. Eliot gives us an unpublished letter to the *Times*, correcting that journal's inaccurate obituary of Joyce. A letter written last October from Vichy France and a long account of Army life by a conscript are of outstanding interest, and there is a sensitive and vivid short story by Miss Diana Witherby. Mr. Graham Greene writes well on Mr. Herbert Read and Mr. MacNeice on the U.S.A. Mr. D. S. Savage writes good verse, and Mr. Henry Moore contributes admirable drawings.

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Spring lists, like everything else, are bound to be somewhat provisional this year. But read in conjunction with the Publishers' announcements the selection which follows gives an indication of the optimism with which the Book Trade is facing the future.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 582

Set by Doll Tearsheet

The *Times* refused to publish a letter from Mr. T. S. Eliot, correcting their oddly inadequate obituary upon James Joyce, which incidentally complained that Joyce failed to appreciate either the higher sides of human character or the serene beauty of nature. A first prize of two guineas and the second of half a guinea are offered for the best obituary notice, in a similar vein (limit 250 words), on Ben Jonson, Wycherley, Swift, Smollett, Byron, Zola, Ibsen or Proust.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, April 7th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 579

Set by Hugh Kingsmill

We offer the usual prizes for *Chestnuts Re-roasted.* As an example, there is the story of the man who visited a doctor about his melancholia. The doctor told him to go and see Grimaldi, and he replied "I am Grimaldi." Re-roasted, this story might end "I have just seen him."

Report by Hugh Kingsmill

Most of the entries were alternative versions of chestnuts, not, as I had hoped, unexpected variations in the ending. For example, *Mr. Guy Innes,* whose entry runs: "G. W. E. Russell's story of the German nobleman who burst through a door ahead of a papal dignitary, giving his title in explanation, and incurring the retort, 'That may account for, but does not excuse, your impoliteness,' might be re-roasted to 'H'm—the first manifestation of the Lebensraum theory!'" Or, in a robuster vein, *Mrs. Natalie Baker*—"Lady visitor at workhouse Infirmary Maternity Ward sees a very dark-haired mother with a small baby with fiery red hair: says—'Why, what *lovely* hair, and yours is so dark. Was the father red-haired?' Answer: 'Don't know, Miss, 'e 'ad 'is 'at on.' *Re-roast*—'Don't know, Miss, it was the blackout.'"

Of the remaining entries, a good few were simply humorous anecdotes, one competitor supplying no less than nine, none of surpassing quality.

There were, however, some entrants who divined my meaning. *Mr. D. H. Mackenzie* had the happy idea of giving Sydney Carton a more convincing exit than "It is a far, far better thing I do . . . ," but the idea was superior to the execution—"it can't be worse there than here, and I'm going out on a good note anyway." *W.T.W.* gave a new but not sufficiently surprising end to the story of Elia, Coleridge and Elia's coat button. *Mr. Maurice and Jack Edelman* expanded the explanation of the man who poured salad oil over his head at dinner. In the original story he says, on a guest expressing surprise: "Oh, I thought it was the vinegar." In the version of Mr. M. and J. Edelman, he says: "How stupid of me. I thought it was the vinegar. I put the oil on before I came."

But the only two entries which entirely came up to my expectations were those from Mr. Lanwerys and Mr. Paul Dehn.

FIRST PRIZE (T. A. LANWERYS)

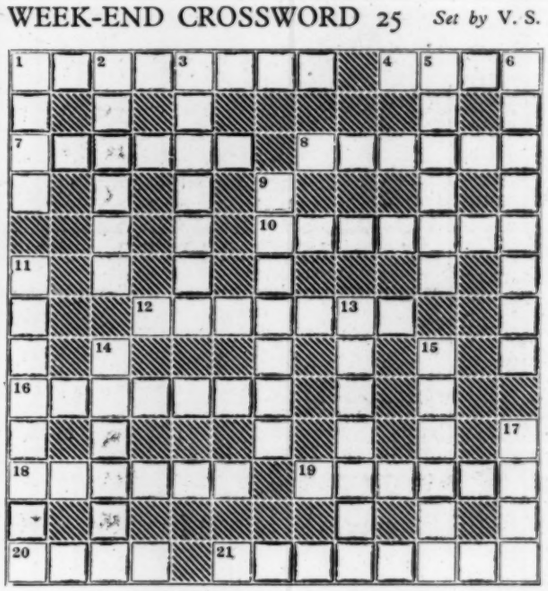
"In 1633, Galileo was brought before the Inquisition and made to denounce his belief in the motion of the earth round the sun. As he got up from his knees the Chief Inquisitor said to him: 'Eppur si muove'—which consoled the old man."

SECOND PRIZE (PAUL DEHN)

"Stanley, who had been sent to search for Livingstone in the African jungle, coming at last upon a European clad similarly to himself, advanced with the words 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume.'

To which the stranger replied: 'You may, sir, but upon what grounds?' and, continuing his journey, was never seen again."

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 25 *Set by* V. S.



The last week's winner is:

L. Johnson, One Ash, Gloddaerth St., Llandudno

ACROSS

1. Boasting an exceedingly round-about relation. (8)
4. Think it can be made with left-over cabbage? (4)
7. Jack's the boy to make things spicy (6)
8. Hasten! (6)
10 Put parson in his place. (7)
12 (*rev.*) Might well make me turn green. (7)
16. Not a maiden over. (7)
18. The hotel had food as was only natural. (6)
19. As on March the fifteenth. (6)
20. Horse-leech? (4)
21. Fish bait for cat-burglar. (8)

DOWN

1. 6 - a permit. (4)
2. Objectively, we say how old we are. (6)
3. Use of the horn in a built-up area. (7)
5. Mouse - colour? (6)
6. Embrace the girl until she is half-suffocated? (8)
9. Clutch at a chair. (7)
11. *Ground Floor!* (8)
13. Former artists' model. (7)
14. Sent in error. (6)
15. Makes a fish study the flower situation. (6)
17. Is twice in the running at Oxford. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	O	B	B	E	D	■	T	O	M	T	O	M
A	■	R	■	■	■	U	■	■	■	R	■	I
N	I	A	L	P	■	P	■	P	E	A	R	L
T	■	S	■	L	■	T	■	R	■	M	■	L
E	■	S	L	A	S	O	P	O	R	P	■	E
R	■	■	■	I	■	T	■	S	■	■	■	R
■	F	R	E	N	C	H	L	E	A	V	E	■
R	■	■	■	T	■	E	■	C	■	■	■	D
O	■	Q	U	I	T	E	S	U	R	E	■	O
T	■	U	■	F	■	Y	■	T	■	V	■	Z
S	T	A	F	F	■	E	■	E	R	O	D	E
A	■	I	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	K	■	N
P	A	L	L	I	D	■	A	S	S	E	S	S

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The chairman of the board, Sir Alexander Roger, had been appointed to lead a British Government Mission to Delhi to investigate wartime production facilities in India, and they regretted his absence from the coming-of-age general meeting of the company to be held on April 1st, 1941.

Many new problems had been encountered during the year, but the factory output had been maintained and orders had reached a high level. Work in progress had increased and stocks generally were higher. Recurring increases in production costs had caused a reduction in both trading and net profits. The profit on trading, dividends on investments, etc., was £238,052, compared with £276,249 in 1939. With the balance brought forward of £167,302, there was available £405,354. Of that £50,333 was applied to depreciation of fixed assets, and after providing for directors' fees and for dividends already paid during 1940 on Preference and Ordinary capital, there was left £317,438, compared with £327,318 in 1939. They proposed to transfer £40,000 to "War Contingencies and Taxation Reserve," and recommended a further dividend of 7 per cent. on the Ordinary stock, making 10 per cent. for the year, and also a cash bonus of 2½ per cent., and a dividend of 10 per cent., with a cash bonus of 2½ per cent. on the Deferred stock and shares. There would then remain to be carried forward £167,422.

Much had been said and written regarding E.P.T., and it was hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find it possible to announce some welcome amendments.

The company was fully occupied and its personnel was the largest on record. They were trying to meet all demands, and in that the board had been assisted to the full by the spirit of their people, who had nobly answered the call.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

THE RISE IN GILT-EDGED AND HOME RAILWAYS—THE PRICES OF GOODS ACT AND EQUITIES—REDUCING STOCK EXCHANGE STAFF

THE reinvestment of the money handed outby the Treasury to the expropriated holders of the dated India Government loans has helped the gilt-edged market not a little—old War Loan being 104⅝—and, oddly enough, has had repercussions in the home railway market. Perhaps the rumour that the four main line companies are to be merged into one undertaking under unified control for the rest of the war has played its part in restoring life to railway stocks. There are many investors who are beginning to think that railway stockholders would be better off under nationalisation than under the present wartime agreement. I do not suppose that there is much truth in the rumour of a railway merger, for the Railway Executive Committee, under the Ministry of Transport, is already operating the railways under "unified control." What is wrong with the present railway agreement is that it is inflationary and even the Stock Exchange is coming to see that nationalisation, with a measure of subsidy, would be less inflationary than an undertaking which binds the Government to raise railway charges and fares to meet every increase in costs. Whether the Government will decide on the principle of nationalisation, with subsidy, to-day and leave the complicated question of compensation for stockholders to be settled after the war, is still doubtful, but as the public interest in the home railway market has become one of discounting "nationalisation fortunes," a speculative purchase of the depressed preference stocks, yielding over 7¾ per cent., is not unreasonable. In fact, I would regard this as much more reasonable than to reinvest India loan money in home railway debentures, yielding not much over 3¾ per cent., which under any nationalisation plan can hardly have much of a market rise.

* * *

What is the Stock Exchange significance of Mr. Oliver Lyttelton's promise, given in the House of Commons on Tuesday, to amend the 1939 Prices of Goods Act? This Act was designed to limit an increase in prices to the actual increase in costs. It did not impose maximum and minimum prices and it allowed prices to be increased by the charging of intermediary commissions and by the rise in overhead costs. This was unfortunate. for the Limitation of Supplies Orders (1) restricted turnover and increased overheads costs enormously, and (2) allowed wholesalers to transfer and traffic in quotas—and pay huge commissions to intermediaries. It is good to hear that Mr. Oliver Lyttelton promises to put a stop to all this by (1) fixing wholesale and retail percentage margins and (2) by abolishing intermediate commissions (or limiting them to a small percentage) in the transfer of quotas. At the same time Mr. Lyttelton will take powers to fix maximum and minimum prices and limit manufacturers' margins as well as those of wholesalers and retailers. These are important measures which every Socialist should welcome. Their significance for the Stock Exchange is twofold. They should remind investors, first, that the war profit is slowly being taken out of equity stocks, secondly that the retailers' and wholesalers' profits are to be curtailed as severely as manufacturers' The 1940 trading accounts of such large distributors as Woolworths, Marks and Spencer and British Home Stores showed that the restriction of the home trade had not yet had effect upon retail profits. Obviously profit margins had been increased. At long last, however, the Government is taking action to limit profit-making in retail trade. The equity stocks of the consumption goods industries must therefore come under investment criticism. 1941 should see the beginning of a curtailment in their dividends. Capt. Waterhouse, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade, gave a plain hint this week to the retail trade that they must begin "concentrating" just as the manufacturers are doing under Government supervision. They should consider, he said, whether "two or more distributing firms doing a reduced amount of business should not for the duration of the war make some mutually satisfactory arrangement or combination," in order to release man-power and woman-power. This seems to be a plain hint to the big chain stores to close down some of their premises on a town-for-town basis.

* * *

The Committee of the London Stock Exchange have written to members, I understand, asking for a return of staff employed pre-war and to-day, with ages. This suggests that it is at last becoming concerned about the waste of man power in the Stock Exchange business. Until, however, the Committee forces members to adopt the Central Clearing House scheme, there can be no appreciable reduction in the staffs now employed. If this scheme is not pressed home it will be a matter deserving the attention of the Board of Trade, especially that department of it dealing with the concentration of production. Apart from the question of clerical staff, there are still far too many jobbers and brokers standing about on the floor of "the House." The amount of bargains which are now put through in the course of the day could be done by a quarter of the members now attending "the House." Even the turnover in Stock Exchange stories does not warrant the present crowd of members.

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SIR GEORGE TILLEY, F.C.I.I.
President and Chairman.

SUMMARY OF THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1940.

INCOME

LIFE BRANCHES. Premium Income **£14,571,319**
FIRE AND ACCIDENT BRANCHES. Premium Income **£1,652,973**

TOTAL INCOME £19,931,244

CLAIMS

LIFE BRANCHES. The Life Claims and Matured Endowments paid and outstanding numbered 429,104 and amounted with Bonuses to **£9,257,231**
FIRE AND ACCIDENT BRANCHES. Claims paid and outstanding amounted to **£833,306**

TOTAL CLAIMS PAID £146,171,427

FUNDS

INCREASE IN FUNDS **£3,970,368**

TOTAL FUNDS £112,389,143

BONUS

ORDINARY BRANCH. In the Ordinary Branch a bonus of £1 per £100 assured was declared on policies entitled to participate in full profits that become claims by death or maturity during 1941.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH. In the Industrial Branch a bonus has been declared on policies, with certain exceptions, effected before 1st January, 1934, that become claims by death or maturity during 1941. Up to date a total sum of over £6,800,000 has been allocated for bonuses to policyholders in this Branch.

ALL ADVERTISEMENTS are accepted subject to the management's approval and right to amend or to refuse any advertisement whether paid for or not.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. March 30th, at 11.30. HUGH SCHONFIELD: "A NEW AGENCY FOR PEACE."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, March 30th, at 11 a.m. Professor G. B. G. CATLIN, M.A., Ph.D.: "THE NEW PHILOSOPHY AND THE NEW ORDER: THE MEANING FOR SOCIETY." Admission Free.

ILFORD P.P.U. Group resuming evening meetings at Church Hall, corner Sheringham Ave., main Romford Rd., commencing Tues., April 1st, 6.30 p.m. Speaker: W. J. Grindlay.

THE ARTS IN THE USSR

A COURSE of Five Lectures. Saturdays at 2.30, 9 Fitzroy Sq., W.1. April 5th: Dr. S. Osiakovski on "Culture and Art." Following Saturdays: Music, Ballet, Literature, Theatre. Tickets for course 3s. 6d. (single lectures 9d.) from Society for Cultural Relations with USSR, 98 Gower Street, W.C.1. (EUSton 2315).

EXHIBITION

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ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, now at Yarkhill Court, nr. Hereford (Tel.: Tarrington 233). Boys and girls, 4–16. Emphasis on languages. Special teaching methods. Modern dietary. MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D.

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A limited number of vacancies in this Service for Indian Candidates will be filled in 1941 on the recommendation of a Selection Board set up in the United Kingdom. Candidates must have taken a good Honours Degree of an approved University in the British Isles, but those who are sitting for their Final Honours Schools this year may be admitted provisionally. The age limits are 21 to 24 on August 1st, 1941. Entry closes on May 15th, 1941. Full particulars can be obtained from the Appointments Boards of Universities in the British Isles or from the Secretary, Services and General Department, India Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.
India Office,
March, 1941.

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BURMA CIVIL SERVICE (CLASS I)
BURMA POLICE (CLASS I).

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Candidates can obtain particulars and forms of application from their University Appointments Board or from the Secretary, Services and General Dept., India Office, Whitehall, S.W.1. When applying for forms candidates should state their date of birth and the degree for which they have qualified.
The latest date for the receipt of applications is May 15th, 1941. Applications should, however, be submitted as soon as possible.
India Office,
March, 1941.

TYNESIDE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE

The Morpeth (Northumberland) Community Council for Social Service requires a woman Social Worker to organise voluntary social services and especially work for women and youth. The post is a responsible one in an interesting field. Preference will be given to applicants with a Social Study Diploma. The commencing salary will be £200 or more per annum, according to qualifications and experience.
Applications, stating age, qualifications and interests, with copies of three recent testimonials and references should be sent to the Director of the Tyneside Council of Social Service, 17 Ellison Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1, before March 31st.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF GIRLS CLUBS requires a Woman Organiser for Northumberland, Yorkshire and Durham, to supervise the recruitment and training of Youth Leaders. Previous experience of club and/or social and educational work necessary. Salary £300 p.a. Applications with copies of three testimonials and full particulars of qualifications to the Employment Officer, N.C.G.C., Hamilton House, Bidborough Street, W.C.1.

WANTED. Food reform lady cook for young children's home. 16 residents. Capable, adaptable, 3 acres garden. Merrileas, Grove Lane, Chalfont St. Giles. Phone: Gerrards Cross 2623.

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YOUNG man, seventeen years old, matriculated two years ago with hons., knowledge of shorthand, typing and book-keeping, wishes post as apprentice with farmer or horticulturist. Strictly vegetarian. Please reply Box 8833.

DR. PHIL., Ass. Master, Modern Languages, subsidiary Latin and History, psychological training, seeks congenial work, preferably teaching (Refugee, Category E). Write Box 8844.

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INTELLIGENT woman, 43, desires post as housekeeper to gentleman. Good cook, exp. Not London. Box 8866.

YOUNG man, 21, exempt, not C.O., seeks post, clerical or otherwise, preferably with Left Wing organisation. Political interests. Good knowledge of accountancy. Box 8848.

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